Melius Inquirendum.

Or

A SOBER INQUIRIE,

Into the Reasonings of the

Serious Inquirie:

Wherein

The Inquirers Cavils against the Principles, his Calumnies against the Preachings and practises Of the

NON-CONFORMISTS

Are

Examined, and refelled,

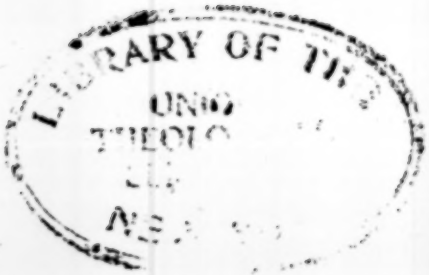
And

St. Augustine, the Synod of Dort, and the Articles of the Church of England in the Quinquarticular points, vindicated.

Prov. 18. 17.

He that is first in his own Cause seemeth just, but his Neighbour cometh, and searcheth him out.

Printed, 1678.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To the Ever, and much honoured S. K. Esquire.

Worthy Sir!

I *Received yours, which brought along with it, both its own welcome, the assurance of your restored health, and continued Love, and also my own entertainment,* The serious and Compassionate Inquirie. *I have now perused it with as much* seriousnes *as 'twas written, and return'd it with more* clemency *then it deserves; and must confess my self cast down so much the lower by my disappointments upon the Reading it by how much the flattering title had rais'd me higher to expect from thence more healing counsels. I have read of a Foolish Embassador in* Queen Elizabeths *dayes, who at his landing whisper'd it abroad that his Embassy was Peace, but when admitted to his Audience, threatned a war: Her Majesty with invincible patience attended the winding up of his long-winded Oration, and then cries out* Heu quam decepta fui, Legatum expectavi, Heraldum accepi! *I expected a Dove with an Olive branch in his mouth, and I tread upon a snake, with a menacing sting in his Tail! Just such another treat has your* Inquirer *given me. The* Title *raised me on tip-toes to see at length that famous* weapon-salve; *which might consolidate the Churches bleeding wounds, but the Book presents me with* a weapon ready drawn to *render them more wide, and more incurable. You see,* Real passion, *will not long conceal it self under* feigned compassion, Nemo diu egit Hypocritam! *A feaverish preternatural heat in the body, usually breaks out at the Lips! The* Crocodiles *tears, are but a sort* formal Grace, *over his Prey, and yet his importunate stomack thinks his throat cut till it be done! You are pleas'd indeed to recommend it to me, as an* Irenic, *and when I said, it had rather the mein of a Military* Tactick, *a friend of ours a little inclinable to be witty replied, it was neither the one nor the other, but an innocent Game at* Ticktack.

It's come in fashion again I perceive to Lard lean discourses with grave sentences, and therefore that you may not think I am cap't, let me remember you of Seneca. Infeliciter ægrotat, cui plus periculi à medico, quam à morbo. *That Patients case must needs be desperate, whose Physician is a greater plague then his disease: And that Church must certainly languish,* quæ nec morbum ferre potest nec remedium, *that can neither endure the* Remedy, *nor the* Malady: *It's a sad cheise, whether we will die of our wound, or our plaister. And therefore your great Pretenders might do well to forbear their slighter Applications, which do but exasperate the Humour, for the more we tamper with improper Means, the less success must we expect from those that are proper, and proportionable.*

I beseech you Sir! answere me with more seriousnes, and compassion, *then this gentleman makes* inquiries. *can you once imagine these Dissenters so irreconciliably fallen out with themselves, as to*

maintein an utter Aversion to be disputed out of a prison, *into* Liberty? *to be argued out of* poverty *into* plenty? *out of imminent danger, into a safe Retreat? Can you really believe them at such deadly feud with their own ease, and Repose, such sworn enemies to their own peace, as to be more ambitious of Ruine, then others are of self preservation? That they should Court their Miseries, with the same passionate Caresses, that other* Inamorato's *do their Mistresses? that they should run over one anothers Heads for the first grasp of Destruction, as if they rod post, all upon the switch, and spur for a presentation to a warm parsonage? that what ever promises of fair and honest conveniences are offered; yet they are so absurdly obstinate as to hold the* Conclusion *of self-created vexation? Believe it Sir! (I know you believe it!) the Non conformists are* Men, *as well as their Neighbours, as apprehensive of Trouble, as desirous of tranquility. They have their Interests, and honest concerns too, on this side Another world; Their backs must be cloathed, their families must eat, or die: and as,* pudicitiâ, & formâ, *so* conscientiâ, & integritate, in foro nil emitur. *A good conscience is not current coyne, in this worlds markets; It will not purchase* one dish of meat, *though with a good stomack, it makes most* Excellent sawce; *and will make* the soule, *a* noble feast *alone. You ought not therefore, you cannot entertain a thought, so unreasonable, so uncharitable, That any thing short of sinning against God, and thereby exposing themselves to his displeasure, any thing on this side polluting their Consciences and so making their best friend their worst enemy, could be a temptation strong enough, to prevail with them to expose to apparent hazard what ever they enjoy of accommodation to render their Lives desirable.*

You might perhaps please your self with a thought, That the Rhetorick of this Discourse would proselyte one of whose intellectuals you had just cause to think nothing but mean, and Contemptible. And had I found his Reasons as Cogent, *as his* style is fluent, *his Arguments as hard, as his words are fest, you could not despair of success upon Him, who is ever ready to offer himself to be prattled upon at the* satisfaction office: *But he that would do his work throughly upon an* impartial Inquirer, *must use* Arguments of steel, *as well as* words of Oile: *And the Main thing I complain of in his Declamations is, that whilst we surfeit upon Rhetorick, we are* chapfallen *for want of Reason; and the hungry Reader sits picking his teeth like a* Spanish Don, *after an insipid salade, as if he had dined upon the oxe at Bartholomew fair. If ever you saw the sign of the* Porter, and Dwarf, *you have seen the true scale of proportion between his* Mellifluous Language, *and* pittiful argumentation. *And I am resolved that no Importunity shall prevail with me to Accept* A well-measured sentence, *or* Laboured period, *for* a Syllogism, *where two gingling words stand for the* propositions. *And a decent comely Cadence for the* Conclusion: *But this I will freely own, that since there is a necessity (which yet we know no Reason for) that the Nonconformists be Reviled, its some Comfort to be rail'd at in* good Language, *and to meet with* Dirty Matter *wrapt up in* clean linnen. *And since you will needs have my judgment of the style, and*

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drest, I shall only say thus much. Cum omnis Arrogantia est molesta, illa Ingenii, & Eloquentiæ, est longè molestissima: *All Arrogance is indeed* nauseous, *but that of wit and Rhetorick in a polemical treatise is a* downright Vomit.

They that talk so Confidently that there can be No Unity *hoped for among Christians, without* Uniformity: *nor peace maintein'd, unless all Men be of a scantling in their judgements, or at least, that (though indulged to retain their* different apprehensions) *they be obliged to conform to the* same practise, *in every circumstance, do seem to me to have entertain'd notions very unworthy the Christian Religion, or perhaps to understand very little of the Nature, and design of it. An* Epicurean, *can nuzzle in* the same straw, *with a swine of his* own Style: *and truly it was well thought on;* sævis inter se convenit ursis. *But Christianity enlarges our love to a greater Latitude, it raises our affections to a Nobler pitch, cordially to embrace with the best Armes of Good will whoever are* Dignified with the Image of Christ, *though not* Distinguisht with our own superscription, *nor expreß the finer strokes of our private conceptions, why can we not love* a Christian *as he is* such, *though differing from us in* Innocent Accidents, *as well as a Man, because he is* a Man, *though his hair be of another Colour, his face of another Symmetry; and complexion then our own?*

It's true, we cannot without Abhorrence, and Recoil of Spirit behold those Monstrous births, which nature (ever designing regularly, yet through the ineptitude of her tools and Matter, miscarrying in her operations) does sometimes affright the world with; Nor can we bear those prodigious heresies, and uncouth blasphemies, the by-blows *of depraved nature, begotten by a* Corrupt Head, *upon a* debauched Heart, *yet even towards these, we ought not to be more monstrous in our behaviour, then they are in their Nature;* One sin *will never heal* another. *Rigorous impositions, will never Cure froward sentiments; It was* A. B. of Hereford's *prescription to cut of the* Head, *because it* Ached; *As* some Divisions, and errours *are* the works of the flesh, *proceeding from pride and passion, nourished by discontent or other unruly lust, so are some* magnified Remedies *for those distempers, which smell as strong, and savour as ranck of the flesh, as those very corruptions which they pretend to purge away.*

They do but therefore delude themselves, and abuse others, whose great Ambition it is to Reduce the world into a strict, and precise uniformity in every minute punctilio. *God has no where promised it, we have no Reason to expect it; All conclude it* unattainable, *and many judge it not* desirable. *The Healing Rule must be this.* In necessariis unitas: in non-necessariis Libertas, in utrisque Charitas. *If our judgments, and practises Center in things fundamental, let a Latitude be allowed in the Non-necessary, and a charitable temper be maintained in both, and then shall we see the wellcome Dawnings of primitive peace, and glory. That Peace which fills up both pages in the gospel, is not founded upon an assent to every inconsiderable Nicetie which an idle and fruitful invention can broach, when he has little else to do, but in cherishing* a quick and vigorous spirit of mutual condescention, and forbearance

of one another under our diſſentings. No external applica-tion can poſſibly reach this inward grievance, purge out that πικροχολία, *the Spirit of Malice, envy, hatred, pride, Revenge, and the wound will heal of it ſelf.*

It will remain the eternal blot of Pope Victor's *memory that he ombroyl'd both Eaſt, and weſt, with the* quarto-decimane *Impertinencies, when he might have allay'd thoſe heats, and ferments of Spirit, by Removing the Subject of a needleſs queſtion, or Leaving it at Liberty as he found it; but I much miſtake my ſelf if ever he, or his Succeſſors in that uſurpation, underſtood the things that belonged to the Churches peace; whoſe ſolemn method it was to ſet the Earth on a flame with ſparks kindled from Hell, blown up by impoſing Pride, yet all along viſibly juſtified with the ſpecious Plea of uniformity.*

Now the Plea (in ſhort) is this: Without Uniformity there can be no Unity, *and* without Unity we muſt expect no inward love, Diverſity of Opinions lead to a diverſity of practiſes, and theſe alienate the affections, which works it ſelf into factions, and parties to the diſquiet and rending of the Church, and hazard of the State. *But theſe reaſonings lye very naked, and open, to the judicious and impartial Conſiderer. For our true Unity lies in the profeſſion of* one God, one Lord Jeſus Chriſt, one Spirit, *and not in* one Ceremony, *and our* love *will therefore be the more eminent, becauſe it has theſe differences to prove its truth, and exerciſe its' ſtrength: And what ever the evil may be in different apprehenſions, the Remedy will never be by Halters, but Humility, and Charity; for* Humility *will Schoole me into this leſſon, to think well of the perſons, and judge modeſtly of the principles of thoſe that diſſent when a* Halter *will ſooner* break the neck, *then* convince the judgment: *It's eaſy to play the Hypocrite and* practiſe *what another pleaſes, but impoſſible to* believe *what I pleaſe my ſelf: But now, if theſe diverſities of judgment, and practiſe, ſhall boyle up into Animoſities, which through their ill management ſhall endanger, or but ſeem to threaten the ſafety of the government: The Magiſtrate in this caſe has* a proper and ſpecifick Remedy of his own, *entruſted in his hands by* divine right; *viz. to Reduce Delinquents into the way of ſobriety by due puniſhments; leaving the ſober, and peaceable Diſſenters in the mean time to reap the fruits of their own innocency; with this ſingular Advantage; that they can now learn by the laſt, and exemplary puniſhments upon others, to watch againſt thoſe corruptions of their hearts, leaſt they ſhou'd break out into any diſmal practiſes unbecoming the Goſpel which they do profeſs, and ſhould adorne.*

How beautiful Uniformity is in the eyes of Men, and what deformity the difference of Modes, Rites, formes of worſhip carry along with it, rending Religion it ſelf leſs pleaſing, and amiable in the eyes of curious and critical Spectators is eaſily pretended; And with equal right, and Reaſon might they complain, that God has not made all Men of one ſize, one ſtature, and thence take occaſion

to

to make goodly Declamations againſt the uglineſs of the Creation.

The variety which we behold in the Univerſe, is not its Deformity, but its beauty; As the eye is more ravished with Landſcape, which enriches it with the grateful interpoſition of Hills, and Valleys, Woods, and Champian, alternately taking up the thoughts, and feeding contemplation with the natural chequere-work of light, and opake, then if it were let out to loose it ſelf in the uniformity of a waſt Horiſon, or empty proſpect; ſo is the ſoul more ſurprized with the glory of the Chriſtian Religion, when various apprehenſions agree in the ſame ſubſtantial holineſs, and ſeveral ſtatures bear the Image of the ſame God: one ſtar differing from another in Glory, yet all ſhining with a Light borrow'd from the ſame fountain, the ſmalleſt eye of heaven filling up a place in the Aſteriſms of thoſe of the firſt Magnitude. If indeed all men were ſeverally cut caſt'd into one even way of profeſſion and practiſe, they whoſe deſign it is to ſleep out their dayes in eaſe, might enjoy themſelves, and their Acquiſts over Conſcience, with more ſoft, and delicate touches of carnal contentment, dreaming all the while that the world is their own; yet ſtill the minds of men would ſit as uneaſy under ſuch Rigours, as he that pinches his body with too ſtraight a ſuite, onely to recommend himſelf to acceptation by the new and obtaining faſhion: *And as we obſerve an* uneaſy ſuit, *ſoon becomes* an old ſuite, *ſo they that ſit pinch't under a ſtraight laced Religious forme, do but grumble, and make ſowre faces, waiting the good hour; when they may fairly and honeſtly diſcharge themſelves of an ungrateful cumber.*

What Advantage this Inquirer *may promiſe to himſelf from ſuch a way of writing, I cannot Divine. The beſt uſe I conceive is to be made of it, is to ſupport the evil* Conſciences *of the Miniſters of their fury, at ſuch tolerable rates, that they may not tear their ſouls in pieces: for* perſecution *for Religion, is an impiety ſo abhorrent to the common ſight of Mankind, that Conſcience though for a while perhaps it may contract a Lethargick drowzineſs, yet will awake and mutter, and grumble ſillibly to be made a pandar to Covetouſneſs, or malice, a ſtalking horſe to baſe Revenge, or to hold a Candle to the Devil; And when it ſhall begin to lowre, and ſcold, it's no little gain that will make a ſop for that barking* Cerberus, *no ſmall fee will bribe it to hold its tongue. But now in comes one of theſe plauſible Declamations, rending the principles of the Diſſenters ſo ſilly, their grounds ſo weak, their lives ſo wicked, their practiſes ſo ridiculous, and yet of ſuch treaſonable, and ſchiſmatical Tendencies, which huſhes the clamour of Conſcience, and like the jogging of the Cradle rocks the* pieviſh thing *aſleep again, aſſoon as it begins to whimper.*

Really Sir! I cannot but exceedingly pitty, and pray for a ſort of perſons of your own Quality, who to their more refined Extract, having added all the ornaments of poſite literature, and thoſe more graceful accompliſhments fetcht home by Travel, and a freer

converſe in the world, beſides that Honour which they have bravely won in the Field, and creditably worn at home, have yet their judgments ſo far impoſed upon, their ſpirits ſo imbitter'd by prejudices formed from miſrepreſentations, as to become the inſtruments of other mens paſſions, in executing thoſe ſeverities, which their calmer thoughts, and more ſedate Adviſements muſt needs Regret; And though a true generous Engliſh Temper, valiant, but not cruel, may confidently claime the Magnanimous Lyon (Cui ſatis eſt proſtraſſe) as the Embleme of Courage mixt with Clemency, for his Creſt, yet ſome few of more Rigid inclinations, will depopulate and lay waſt many a mile about them, who when they behold an odd kind of Peace, as the happy fruits of their cruelties, applaud themſelves for perſons of deep judgment, and great ſucceſs, ſtyling Deſolation, Univerſal quiet.

If you aſk me why I have not underwritten my Name beſides that you know it well enough without my ſubſcription, you may be pleas'd to Remember what you once told me, That Though Truth needs no Maſke, ſhe may want a helmet; and ſeeing ſhe deſires no better, do not grudge her the Covert of Darkneſs. Innocency knows no guilt that ſhould Dye her face with ſhame, yet ſhe apprehends danger, which may make her Pale with fear. Truth ſeeks no Corners, as to the juſtice of her cauſe; and yet ſhe may ſeek a covert as to the injuſtice of her judge. I am not conſcious to my ſelf of any evil Deſign, but they who will call Preaching, Prating, will hardly ſcruple to call my Ears Hornes, and I am not to be judge in the Caſe.

I am Confident you commiſerate our hard fate, and the unequal Termes our huffing Antagoniſts impoſe upon us. They chalenge us to a paper duel in the moſt provoking Language ſuch as would ſet an edge upon the moſt obtuſe coward. If Modeſty, an ambition for peace, or love of retiredneſs tempt us to decline the Combate we are then Poſted up for Cowardiſe; but if we awaken ſo much ſpirit as to take up the gauntlet, and return the mildeſt Anſwere, then Truſty R. gets it in the wind, and immediately ſummons his Hamlets, raiſes the whole poſſe Eccleſiæ, and Spiritual Militia upon us, and ſtrangles the helpleſs Infant in the Cradle: A wary Anſwere may ſometimes ſteal of the forme before it's ſtarted, then comes in Mr. Warden M. (the common Hunt) whiſtles out the whole pack of his infallible beagles, purſues, runs down, catches the poor fugitive, and then you know to ſeize a book is the moſt effectual way to Confute it: If one in a thouſand has the happy ſucceſs, to eſcape this Inquiſition, then the New Smectymnuan Divines, or Convocation of the Coffee-houſe will reply upon it, that they will, if it was pend with becoming ſeriouſneſs and gravity, they have one Reply. This is nothing but whining, or Raving: if the ſtyle be briſk't with a daſh or ſo of facetiouſneſs, they have one word ready to Confute it. This is Drollery, Burleſque buffoonry! A blank Imprimatur lay ready every week againſt poor Robin, (the doughty ſecond of the Friendly debate, and Eccleſiaſtical Polity) creeps abroad; and to

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all his blaſphemies, obſcenities, ſcurrilities, ribaldries, the privi-ledge underwrites. This may be printed: *If Mr. Sh. goes big with ſome of his illegitimate Socinian fooleries. A Chaplain waits at the door to midwife the brat into the World: But if a piece comes out with little zeale for ceremonies, though in vindication of the* old *Doctrine of the* Ancient *Church of England, it expects nothing but* Lydford Law, *firſt to be condemn'd, and afterwards perhaps to be tryed: Againſt all which I ſee no other remedy, but ſilent complaints, or it may be this ſhort Rejoinder,* Tolle Legem & fiat diſputatio!

But I have already given you too much trouble, *what remains muſt be* mine own, *to ſtudy to be Maſter of a calm, ſerene, ſubmiſſive frame of heart, which may enable me to ſuffer like a Chriſtian, for doing like a Chriſtian! And if after all I cannot eſcape the laſh of virulent Tongues, and violent hands, yet at Leaſt I may not fall under the ſeverer ſtings of my own Conſcience.*

I ſhall not need to beg of you to give this Paper a Leaſurely, and impartial peruſal, 'tis ſo Agreable to your own Nature, and that ſtrict Law which your own Wiſdome has impos'd upon you, Not to paſs a final judgment upon any thing, before you have duely weighed all things; *that as I cannot ſuſpect you will decline your conſtant, and fixed Method in my ſingle Caſe, ſo I can hardly prevail with my ſelf to aſk that* as a favour, *which you* in juſtice *muſt needs grant.*

I ſhall only beg the pardon of this interruption given to your important concernes, and if you ſmile ſometimes at my ſimplicity, let that be the ſharpeſt correction, your affection will ſuffer you to give to

Honour'd Sir!

Your much obliged Servant and moſt unworthy Friend,

G. W.

The Introduction Considered, and the Enquirer's expected Advantages from his Comparison between the Religion of the former and present Times, seasonably disappointed.

A *Rhetorical Introduction* is nothing but a *Politick Shooing-horn* to draw on an *incredible discourse* more smoothly over the Readers *tender Belief*, in case he should prove too high in the *Instep*: Or you may please to call it *a Lesser Wedge*, prudently applyed to a knotty piece to make way for a greater; For with such grave Maxims, wise men arm themselves; *To drive that Wedge*, not which is best in it self, *but which will go*. The Learned *Verulam* observes, That *they are not those stincks, which the Nostrils streight abhor, and expel, which are most pernicious; but such Airs as have some similitude with mans Body, and so insinuate themselves, and betray the Spirits.* Thus downright Railing Discourses are in part their own *Antidotes*; and we stop our Noses at those fulsom eructations of some writers, who have been certainly fed a long time with Carrion; whereas these more *plausible Pieces* recommended to our gusto by *the Vehicle* of supple phrase, and glib expressions, and with all *Aromatized* with a *whiff of pretended Charity*, creep into *the affections*, and so with ease betray the judgement; for *Perit judicium cum re transit in affectum.* When a *Controversy* once gets fair Quarter in *the affections*, it will soon undermine, and blow up *the understanding*; so hard it is to perswade, that it can be *Poyson* which is *sweet*, or destructive to Nature which accommodates it self to the Critical Humours of the Palate.

It has pleased, the Enquirer (upon Mature advice no doubt) to usher in the main Body of his Discourse, with a Pathetical comparison *between the ancient state of Christianity, and the present*; and he very affectionately *laments the Change*: wherein he imitates the vain humour of our young travellers, who at their return unmeasurably prædicate the glories of forreign Countreys; but can find nothing but mean, and contemptible to bestow on their Native Soil: Whether it be that they would be thought to know something more than those home-bred Snails which never travell'd beyond the sight, or smell of their own Chimneys, or that they presume to shelter themselves under *that Protection* which all *great Travellers* are supposed to carry *in their Pockets*; Yet this is certain, that *far-fetcht*, and *dear-bought*, will recommend a very trite, and *ordinary story*, to the Acceptation and Admiration of *the Many*.

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The Poets are never more transported into pleasing extasie, then when they are gotten into the ἀϊδηλα of the *Golden Age*; and then the Rivers shall flow *with pure Nectar and Milk*; The Trees distil *Life Honey*; and the prodigal Earth, without cultivation gladly exhaust her Spirits, and spin out her Bowels to pay Tribute to the satisfaction of Mankind; with a great many more Pedantick good-morrows; But when once that *Iron Age* appeared with its Harder-face; *Pandora's* Box was then open'd, and whole Legions of Furies invaded the world; But above all, *Navigation and Trade*, those two implacable enemies *to all Religion*, were invented, and I cannot sufficiently admire, that amongst all the *Reasons* muster'd up against those *Schismatical Evils*, This Primitive one, That *they came in with the Iron Age*, escaped our Enquirer's Industry.

As all good Christians are ready to give the Primitive times their *due praises*, and as willing to lament the Degeneracy, and Apostacy of *the present*, so they look upon it as a piece of Incivility no modest person would be guilty of, to spend *all his Frankincense* in embalming the memory of the Ages *Dead, and gone*; whilst *the present*, lies like a rotten Carcase stinking above-ground without the courtesie of a Flannel shrowd to cover its nakedness. A vanity (to say nothing more severe) noted by Wisdom it self, *Eccles. 7. 10. Say not thou, what is the cause that the former dayes were better than these? for thou dost not* Enquire *wisely concerning this.*

Had this Gentleman concern'd himself to appear *a wise and impartial*, as well as a *Compassionate Enquirer*, he had never been guilty of *that folly* to pelt witty Sentences and Apothegms at his Readers head, as Boys do Snow-balls, which with equal ease, and execution, may be retorted For thus might a vulgar *Ingeny* form a Panegyrick of the singular Piety and exemplary Holiness of those Primitive Christians. That *they employed their Affections in keeping the old Commandments, and never strained their Inventions to find out new ones: They made no more Duties, nor Sins, than God had made and left the way to Heaven no narrower, th. Gate no straighter than they found it: They judged him a good man that squared his Conversation, a pious man that modelled his Devotions by that of the Word, though he knew no other Rubrick: They contented themselves with Gospel simplicity, and durst not be wise above what was written, least, they should prove learned fools: They understood what a Spirit of Bearing with, and forbearing of one another Signified; And the Fathers of the Church approved themselves to deserve that venerable Character, who never dasht out their childrens brains, because their Heads were not all of one Block.*

That little wit which there is in these popular Trappings, is only this. To single out the most *eminent Instances* of Refined Sanctity in the Primitive times, and from thence to take *the general measures* of their Devotion, and then again to cull out

the moſt *Infamous Examples* of prodigious Villanies in the preſent Age, and from thence to give us the *Idea* of our Modern Piety; that is, to make a mis-ſhapen Parallel between the *Flower* of thoſe, and the *Bran* of theſe days.

He that would make a right Judgement of the *Wealth* of a Nation, muſt not viſit the *Hoſpitals* only: He that would take a juſt Proſpect of a Nations *Piety*, muſt not inform his Pencil from the Records of *New*-gate, or the Executions of *Tiburn*: Or if he would be ſatisfied in the *ſweetneſs* of a City, I would not adviſe him to hang his Noſe over the *Vaults, and Common-ſhores*: Or if he would take the exact Height of the Nations *Glory*, let him not take inſtructions from ſome *depopulated Village*: If we conſider the *beſt of the worſt man*, or the *worſt of the beſt man*; if we only view the Mole or Wart upon the *faireſt face*, and ſome *ſingle feature* in the moſt *deformed*, we may eaſily betray our ſelves in this falſe judgement; that *Therſites* was a great *Beauty*, and *Abſalom* a *Gorgon*: Thus if we will denominate the lapſed Ages from ſome eminent Rarities of Virtue: or the preſent, from ſome notorious Examples of Impiety, we ſhall never diſtinguiſh between the Common-wealth of *Plato*, and the Dregs of *Romulus*.

Suppoſe we, that ſome Tribunitial Orator, to exerciſe the gallantry of his Pen in a Theme ſo common, and copious, wou'd ſet himſelf to *decry the Piety* of that other World, Let him Copy out the *Treachery of Judas*, exaggerate the *Apoſtacy of Demas*, the Heretical pravity of *Hymenæus*, and *Philetus*; let him enlarge upon the *Ambition* of *Diotrephes*, the Blaſphemies of *Cerinthus*, the Debaucheries of the *Nicolaitans*; and above all, be ſure to plie the Villanies of the *Gnoſticks*, with warm Cloaths, and what a frightful *Meduſa* would that Age appear, if drawn to the life by thoſe Exemplars?

Suppoſe once more that our Orator had an itch to imploy his mercenary Pen to ſcrape acquaintance with ſome tempting preferment; to reconcile his lines to the Genius of the preſent Age, and imploy his Talents where he ſhall not loſe his oyl, and pains, Let him with *Apelles* take up on truſt the particular Excellencies of the moſt exemplary Chriſtians, let him borrow the ſingle beauties of meekneſs, patience, humility, charity, faith, ſelf-denyal, conſtancy; that like the *Sporades* lie diſperſed and ſcattered up and down the world; let him Amaſſe all the individual worthineſſes that are not yet baniſht to Heaven, and unite all theſe in one Table, and ſuch a draught perhaps ſhall not need to be aſhamed to ſhew its face before the moſt exact pieces of proportion that are reſerved in the Archives of Antiquity. And to ſpeak a plain truth, if one tenth part of what theſe men aſcribe to their *great Patrons* in their *Dedicatory Epiſtles* were true, I could eaſily evince that there are very few who have the diſpoſal of fat Advowſons, but are *more Illuſtrious Saints*, than any of the *Primitive Fathers*, and perhaps we ſhall not need to except the *Twelve Apoſtles*.

As he would ſcandalouſly reproach the ſtable fixed Providence of God, that ſhould conclude Nature to be almoſt worn off her legs, her Powers enfeebled, her Spirits debilitated from the precotious deaths of thoſe who dig their graves with their teeth, and with the ſheers of Luxury and Riot cut the thread of their lives before Reaſon would ſay it was half ſpun out to its juſt length; ſo would he no leſs maliciouſly blaſpheme the ſteady Reiglement, and ſuperintendency of the only Head, and Governour of the Church, with the efficacious influences of the H. Spirit upon the Souls of true Chriſtians, who from Hypocriſie *the mother*, and her *daughter Apoſtacy* of thoſe who Court Religion for her Dowry, ſhall conclude againſt the power of Godlineſs in thoſe Chriſtians, which is very conſpicuous to all who are not concern'd in point of ſelf-preſervation, and ſelf-juſtification to decry real Holineſs according to the *Primitive Pattern*, whilſt they would be thought the great Adorers of *the Primitive Times*.

A practice well-becoming the Legions of Beelzebub, or the trained bands of *Accaron*, whoſe delight it is with the importunate Flie, to fix upon the galled parts, exaſperating ſores with their venomous proboſces, which would heal of themſelves; whilſt prejudice will not ſuffer them to take notice of the entire, and ſounder parts.

What Arguments our Enquirer hath furniſht Atheiſm with to *wound* Religion, which he would pretend to *heal*, I ſhall not need to obſerve, they are a generation quick-ſighted to eſpie, and take their advantages without a Monitor: But when I hear him Lament, *the palpable contradiction of the lives of the Generality of Chriſtians now, to the Rules of their own Religion, and that few take the meaſures of their Actions, or the Rule of their lives from the New Teſtament.* I expect to hear others ask; why they ſhould be more obliged to the Humility, Self-denial, Sobriety recommended in the Goſpel, than their Teachers? who apparently conform themſelves to the ſecular Grandeur, and ſwelling Pomp of the moſt licentious times: And if a plain Truth might be ſpoken, without any ones taking ſnuff, there can be no more Reaſon aſſigned, why *the People* ſhould be tyed up to the Rules of the N. T. *in their Lives*, than *Church-men* are to make it the Rule, and Rubrick of *their Worſhip*: They who expect *Primitive Submiſſion*, muſt give Precedents of *Primitive Moderation*: And if they will exact and challenge the *Ancient Manners*, let us ſee in them the *Ancient Examples*: In vain ſhall *Mother Crab* command her daughter to creep *forward*, if ſhe confutes her *inſtruction* by creeping *backward*.

If then Matters be really ſo Retrograde, and gone off from their true Centers; yet it cannot become them to Condemn the World for being *Wrong*, who reſolve it ſhall never be *Right*. He that complains

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things are not *as they were*, and yet Diſputes that they ought to be *as they are*; ſhall never diſpute me into a Plerophory of his ſincerity. They that confeſs a want of *the Ancient Diſcipline*, which yet they will not *reſtore*, and complain at the ſame time of a Defect of *the Ancient Piety*, which they pretend they cannot *Remedy*, do but weep over *the Vineyard* which is laid waſt, whilſt they either pluck up the *Hedge*, or refuſe to repair the decayed *Mounds and Fences*; or deplore an *Inundation of Wickedneſs* which is broken in upon us, and yet ſtand by *the Sluce*, and will not *ſhut it down*, nor ſuffer *others to do it*, becauſe they have *no Call* to the Work.

All things in this lower World inſenſibly contract corruption, and with a ſilent foot decline from their Original Integrity; ſo that every day furniſhes us with New Reaſons to ſcowr off the encroaching Ruſt, and reſtore them to their Primitive Brightneſs. He that rows againſt the Stream, muſt inceſſantly ply his Arms, and Oars, and work againſt the preſſing importunity of the Current, or elſe ſhall find himſelf unawares hurried down the Stream.

——— *Sic omnia fato,*
In peius ruere, ac retro ſublapſa referri. Virg.

It was a ſeaſonable Queſtion of a Great Perſon many years ago; *Why the Civil State ſhould be purged, and reſtored, by good and wholſome Laws, made every Third or Fourth Year in Parliament, providing Remedies, as faſt as Time breedeth Miſchiefs; and contrariwiſe the Eccleſiaſtical State ſhould ſtill continue upon the Dregs of Time, and receive no alterations, now for this five and forty years, and more?* And I am ſure its another five and forty years; and upwards, ſince that Complaint was made.

It will then be very ſeaſonable to complain of *Modern Corruption*, and cry up *Primitive Devotion* in theſe Men, when they ſhall demonſtrate a real willingneſs to reduce what is amiſs into order, to make what is crooked ſtraight, by *the Primitive Rule of Reformation*.

That *the Converſations of thoſe early Chriſtians was Commendable*, I readily admit; that there is a wretched Degeneracy in our days, I ſadly ſee, yet give me leave to Note, and Deteſt the Hypocriſie of thoſe who build Stately Monuments to, and beſtow Ranting Epitaphs upon *the Deceaſed Piety* of the Former, and yet deſtroy or diſcourage the Remaining Piety of the preſent Age: That pluck down the Living Temples of the Spirit, that upon their Ruines they may build their own Palaces; who firſt Stigmatize *Primitive Holineſs* with the Modern Brand of Fanaticiſme, and then perſecute it; and the ſame time Canonize *Primitive Superſtition*, for the Chriſtian Religion, and then *Impoſe it*.

But our Enquirer has mark'd out ſome of the peculiar Glories of thoſe Elder Times, and perhaps it may not be unpleaſant

ſant to the Reader to run over with me ſome of their Excellencies.

1 *Of old to be a Chriſtian, was to be all that's Holy, Juſt and Good*, &c. When I read theſe juvenile Declamations in praiſe of Vertue, I am ready to ſnatch the Anſwer out of *his* mouth, who replyed in a Caſe not unlike: *Quis enim unquam vituperavit?* I wonder who ever ſpoke one word againſt it? But it's eaſy to ſtrain a String till it breaks, which being ſcrewed up to its juſt Height, would bear its part in the Harmony. To be *All that's Holy, All that's Juſt, All that's Good*; is the Glory of Him whom 'tis our Duty to imitate, our Folly to ſtrive to equaliſe: In a limited ſenſe, 'tis the Glory of thoſe Bleſſed Ones, who are *Comprehenſores*; to be *really Holy, truly Juſt, ſincerely Good*, is pretty fair for thoſe that paſs under the Notion of *Viatores*: But if this were the Character of Primitive Sainteſhip the Apoſtle *Paul* muſt not have worn a *Red Letter* in our Enquirers *Calender*, who profeſſes *Philip* 3. 12, 13. That *he had not already attained, neither was already perfect, nor counted himſelf to have apprehended; but yet he reached forth unto thoſe things which were before; he preſs'd towards the Mark for the Prize of the High Calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus.*

2. *Wherever Religion came, it was a Principle of Purity in Mens Hearts, Honeſty in their Lives, and Peace in Kingdoms*, &c. Wherever Religion came? *Why Religion may come*, either in *the Declaration* of it, or in *the Power*, and *Cordial Acceptation* of it. And I preſume this Enquirer will not aſſert, That *whenever Religion came* in the *former ſenſe*, it had *thoſe Bleſſed Effects* in the *Pureſt Primitive Times*; and I am confident he cannot deny, that *wherever it comes*, in the *latter ſenſe* it produces thoſe Happy Fruits even in *the worſt of Times*. But ſo eaſy it is to render trivial, and common matter plauſible to the Ear, whilſt we are cheated with *a Charivary of Sounding Braſs*, or the Ditty of *a Tinckling Symbal*.

3. But then *the Chriſtian Faith was not a Trick of Wit*. In *it ſelf* indeed it was not, nor is ſo *now*; yet Crafty Knaves would venture *then*, καπηλεύειν τὸν λόγον τῦ Θεῦ. 2 *Cor.* 2. 17. to dilute the *Pure Wine of Gods Word* with the *Watry Mixtures of their own Inventions*, and we have thoſe *ſtill* that will be ſhewing ſuch tricks of audacious wit upon it *now*.

What therefore he Quotes from *Lactantius*, any Man may venture to ſay, and never hurt himſelf, or ſpoil his credit, *Give me a fierce and conceitious Man; and if he will but apply himſelf to th Grace and Inſtitutions of the Goſpel, he ſhall become as meek as a Lamb: Let a covetous Perſon hearken to the Doctrine of the Goſpel, and he ſhall preſently diſpenſe his Money.* Nay, for once I will ſay as bold a word as that comes to. Give me the moſt inhumane, and barbarous Perſecutor, that without ſcruple of Conſcience *eats no Gods People like Bread*; and if he will but conform to the Doctrine of the Goſpel, he ſhall be forced to

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take out *a new Lesson*, and turn over *a New Leaf*, and of *a Bloody Saul*, become *a Paul*; profess, or preach the same Jesus whom he has so outragiously persecuted: Give me that *Churchman*, that seeks his Peoples *Goods* more than their *Good*; he that heaps *Ossa* upon *Pelios*, and *Olympus* upon both, one Steeple upon another, and a third upon the former, as if he hoped either to *Scale* or *Purchase* Heaven, to take it by *Storm* or *Surrender*; and let him but attend, and give up himself to those documents, which he either *Preaches*, or however *Reads*, and he shall presently refund the *Price of Souls*, and errogate upon the *Members of Christ*, what he had once squeezed out of *Spungy Consciences*.

But the Heathens could boast as much as this comes to of their Moral Precepts.

Invidus, Iracundus, acer, vinosus Amator:
Nemo adeò ferus est ut non mitescere possit,
Si modò culturæ patientem commodet Aurem. Horat.

4. *Then the Professors of Christianity were all of one Heart, and one Lip; there was then but one Division of Men:* εὐσεβεῖς & ἀσεβεῖς, *were the only Sects the World was divided by: All Good Men were of one way, and all Evil Men of another.*

I have seriously considered for what juncture of Time this Eloquent Period was calculated; and when those happy days did shine, that might deserve so fair a Character: And I conclude it must be some *Pre-Adamitical State*, commencing with the *Julian Period*; or at lowest that of *Paradise*, when we may probably conjecture, *That all Good Men were of one Mind*, because there was but *one Man* there. But if the Enquirer would acknowledge it as a favour, I would shew him how he might reconcile his Rhetorick to Truth, which is not often feazible: *All Good Men were of one Way*, the *Way of Holiness leading to Happiness*; *And all Evil Men were of another Way*, the *Way of Sin and Impenitency which leads to Misery*: But so it is still, and thousands of Ages will never alter the Case. But then to be of *one Heart and Lip* in the minute Circumstances of Religion, that I never heard *All Men were*, nor never expect they *will be so* on this side absolute perfection. The *Roman* Church even in the Apostolical Times, was not without its Heats and Animosities: Some there were, who *being weak in the Faith*, discerned not their *Christian Liberty*, but confined themselves to Salades, and judged others that went beyond their *Short Tedder*, as *Libertines*, and Men of a *Latitudinarian Conscience*, others who were *strong*, and understood that Christ had emancipated them from the Yoke of *Mosaical Ceremonies*, used their freedom, and these despised the rest, as a company of scrupulous Coxcombs; What fierce bandyings and jostlings there were in the Church of *Corinth*, whilst

whilſt one Party hangs out *the Enſigns of Paul*; another ſhelters it ſelf under *the Headſhip of Peter*; and perhaps a third not afraid to entitle *the Prince of Peace* to their *Quarrels*, and draw in Chriſt himſelf to be *the Head of a Faction*: And yet theſe were all Members of the ſame Church; and whilſt agreeing in the Subſtantials of Religion, the Apoſtle durſt not ſtrike in with *one Party*, to cruſh *the other*, but maintains the *Flame* of Charity alive, amidſt *the Sparks* of their Contentions in things remote from the Foundation.

That great Promiſe that God would make his People *of one Heart, and one Lip*, is either *not underſtood*, or *not fulfilled*; or if fulfilled in *ſome* meaſure, yet the *more Glorious Accompliſhment* thereof reſerved for Times and Perſons of a more healing Temper, and to be brought about by more proportionable means, than Gibbets, Halters, Fire and Faggot, *viz.* the pouring out *the Spirit of Light and Love*.

I think I may refer it to almoſt any one to judge; whether he be not moſt ridiculouſly abſurd, that ſhall ſo ſeverely Animadvert upon *our preſent Diviſions*, when he may at ſuch caſie and cheap rates heal them all, and yet will not. By ſome *Mens Words* you would think they *hated Diviſions implacably*; but by *their actings*, you would think they *lov'd them as deſperately*.

Let the Primitive Rule of Reformation, of which the Reverend Dr. *Pierce* has minded the forgetful Age, be ſeverely attended to; *To ſet what is crooked ſtraight, by what was from the Beginning*; Let all the Churches Conform to it, and Reform by it, and then will Diſcord be as great a ſtranger amongſt Chriſtians as Peace is ſaid to be at this day. Lay but the weight and ſtreſs of Unity upon *Neceſſaries*, in the reſt exerciſe (*charity*; and then, as we never had *Peace* about the Inſtitutions of Men, ſo we ſhall never have *Wars* about the confeſſed Inſtitutions of Chriſt.

The Chriſtian Religion numbers it amongſt its peculiar Glories, and *choiceſt Singularities*, that it teaches us to maintain Brotherly Love, under *differing Apprehenſions*, *and variety of Practiſes*, in thoſe leſſer matters, which neither weaken Holineſs, nor croſs the Deſign of the Goſpel.

As God in *the firſt Creation* formed Men of differing Sizes, various Statures, and multiform Shapes and Complexions, and yet none quarrel upon that account; none is ſo *Apiſh* to enact, the *Fox* ſhall cut off his *Train*, becauſe the other has none. None will impoſe his own Height as the juſt Standard of all others, that he that is a Hairs-breadth taller ſhall be adjudged *a Monſter*, and he that is as much lower ſhall wear the reproach of *a Dwarf*: So in *the New Creation*, it's none of Chriſt's deſign to reduce all Sincere Believers to *an uniformity* in every Punctilio in judgment, and practiſe, but to perform a Nobler, and more

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Glorious Work than this, namely to infuse such *a Spirit of Love*, and from thence such *Healing Counsels*, to inspire into all his Disciples *such Moderation*, such *Condescention*, that notwithstanding these diversities they may all love as Brethren, and *keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace*; and if in any thing, any one be otherwise minded, to wait *till the God of Peace from the Word of Peace should Reveal it unto him*

Nor indeed is it any credit to the Religion of our Saviour, to be represented to the World, as if it taught so *narrow and restrained a Charity* that would only embrace those that were Cast in the Mold with our own particular perswasions; or to hang on a String only with those who jump in with our own Points to a Tag: An Excellency, if it be one, to be found more eminently amongst the Lyons in the Tower, the *Turks* in their Mosques, or perhaps of old in the *African* Conventicle, (much Reviled, and as much Imitated) who Monopoliz'd Salvation to them that were *Ex parte Donati*.

But that which is the most pleasant in this Period, is, To see what a world of Truth our Compassionate Enquirer has Massacred for the sake of one poor sorry *Climax*. *There are now* (says he) *Almost as many Opinions as Men, as many Parties as Opinions, and as many Religions as either.* That *Almost* may, I confess, do him some service; it has in its days help'd many a lame Dog over the Stile: But surely there may be great *diversities of Opinions* amongst them that are of *the same Religion*; He might as well conclude, that the *Spaniard and the French*, are of Two Religions, because the one buttons his Doublet upwards, the other downwards. I have been much taken with a Decree that I found in B. *Jewel*, made by Pope *Innocent* III. and might have become a far better Man.

, Quoniam in plerisque partibus, intra eandem Civitatem, & , Diocesim, permisti sunt populi diversarum linguarum, haben- , tes sub *una fide*, *varios Ritus*, & *Mores*, Districtè præcipi- , mus, ut Pontifices hujusmodi Civitatum, provideant viros ido- , neos, qui secundum diversitates Rituum, & Linguarum, di- , vina illis officia Celebrent, & Sacramenta Administrent.

Forasmuch as in most places, in the same City, and Diocess, there are people of divers Languages mingled together, who under one, and the same Faith, do retain differing Ceremonies, and Customs; we do therefore expressly charge, and command the Bishops of the said Cities, and Dioceses, to provide able Persons; who may Celebrate amongst them the Divine Offices, and Administer to them the Sacraments, according to their differing Languages and Ceremonies.

Differing Rites, and Observations, whilst left *indifferent*, will not make *differing Religions*; what they may do, when *imposed as the necessary Terms of Communion*, I shall not Determine.

Nay, *that there are as many Parties, as Opinions*, will need not only *some Grains*, but *whole Bushels of Salt* to keep it sweet: Do

we

we not see those of *the same Party* indulge each other in their *private conceptions*; and none more than they who most Triumph in a pretended *Unity*, *and Uniformity*, who can agree in *few things* amongst themselves, and yet can sweetly accord to extirpate all but themselves.

5. *Time was* (says our Enquirer) *when Men Sacrificed their Lives in Testimony to their Faith, as frankly as since they have done to their Passion, Revenge, and Ambition.* And *Time is* (says another) *when Men will Sacrifice the Lives of their Brethren, and the Peace of the Church to the same waspish Deities, and their own Consciences to boot, to another Idol known of old by the Name of* Mammon. Such Elegant Orations have we penn'd about *Time was*, and *Time is*, that I suspect they were indited from Friet *Bacon's* Brazen Head-piece. But more Anger still! *Then was Charity counted as Essential a part of Religion, as Censoriousness is now with too many.* This is witty enough in all reason! And one wou'd not stick to break a Jest now and then, though it broke anothers Head, or perhaps his own with the Splinters But Men are bad enough, and need not be worse than they are: Censoriousness, is a Crime too *Odious* to be *Defended*, and yet too *Notorious* to be *Denyed*, to *Cover a fault* will make it *Two*; but to *justify* it, will make it *Many*: But yet that any should make this Censoriousness *a part*, much more an *Essential part* of their Religion, is an Hyperbole too daring for my weak Faith to meddle with.

I have been considering into what place of Religion they can possibly crowd it, whether into *their Creed* or *Ten Commandments*: The Papists have rob'd the people of just *one half* of a Sacrament, and then to give them their due, to make them ample satisfaction, they have created *five entire Sacraments, de Novo*; They have craftily also purloyned the *whole Second Commandment*; but then, because the Laity have an inkling that there were once Ten of them, lest they should miss one out of the Decalogue, they have very discreetly split *the Tenth into a Couple*: But where to wedge in this *Censoriousness* was a great difficulty, and had continued so, had not some repealed *the Fourth Commandment*, as *purely Ceremonial*; and therefore if any where, *there* it must go.

Some perhaps may Censure this Censurer as guilty of more Censoriousness, than half the World besides; but such do not consider, that we must allow for shrinking in the Silk grograin Phrase of Rethoricians; what a flat, humble, low, jejune expression had it been to have said; *Truly Men are too Censorious!* But now the Stile mantles, and the Language brisles, and burnishes, it comes off with a Noble Grace, it fills the Mouth, and sounds augustly; to say, *They make it an Essential part of their Religion.*

6. *Nothing was then thought too good, or costly, for the Service of God, or Religion; Men could not content themselves to serve God with that which cost them nothing. It was one, a* Julian, *or such*

such another, that envied the costly Vessels wherewith Christ was served. Ay! *Time was* indeed, (and pity it is, so good a Time had not its Wings clip'd from flying away!) *Time was*, that Mens Money burnt their Pocket-bottoms out, when the fire of Purgatory made it too hot, for the most frozen Usurer to hold: but now Alas, *That Time is past.* —— And for the *Brazen Head*, it fell down, and dash'd out its Brains! If these things be truly represented, and that the Glory of the Primitive Times did consist in *Pompous Devotions, Polished Altars, Guilded Organs, Sumptuous Candlesticks, Embroidered Copes, Silken Cowles*; much good may it do them, we neither envy, nor shall imitate their Inimitable Excellencies.

If *Julian* envied the Plate wherein Christ was served, let him grow lean with envy; but surely the Chronicles are hugely wide, if these matters be not misfaid: The cost and charges at which the Primitive Christians were in the Service of their God, and Saviour, was quite another thing; they bestowed their hearts upon him, bore reproach for him, laid down their lives, and whatever was dear to them in defence of his Truth; Silver, and Gold they had none, and Christ as little need of it.

However, that Age could not well upbraid the present with irreligion, if the true measure of Gods Worship be to be taken from its *exterior Garb, and Splendor*: As we cannot mock them with their *Wooden Presbyters*, so I am certain they could not us with *Wooden Chalices*; at least in this one particular I expect he should retract, and freely own, that for *Costly Worship* (which is the main) we have theere out-vy'd *the Primitive Times.*

I shall not much concern my self to reflect upon that useful policy of those who have imposed upon *the Credulus World*, a Belief, that whatever is devoted to *the Priests*, is therein Consecrated *to God*, but yet I may silently admire the easiness of those Ages that suffer'd themselves so tamely to be abus'd: And above all, I cannot but wonder at the *Chaldeans*, a People renowned for Wisdom, that they could once be perswaded by *the Priests of Bell*, that his Hungry Deity had devoured all that good Beef, and Mutton, which their blind Devotion offer'd at his Altar. The Truth is, their *own Belly was their God*, and poor *Bell*, bore all the blame of their gluttony. Thus what they got over their Idols back, they spend it under his, or upon their own insatiable Paunches: It's no new thing for Sacred Names to give Patronage to Avarice: Thus the Kite soars aloft, as if she designed *Heaven*, when her steady Eye is fix'd upon *the Prey below*; and Glorious Pretences to endow the Holy Mother Church, had almost reduced the Lay-world to Beggery.

7. *In those early days the Christian Assemblies drained the Theatres.* Ay! but where's the Antithesis? But now (so it should have run) the Theatres have drained the Christian Assemblies: But that had been a Repartee too close, and home for one that would be *kind to himself.* Had the Primitive Preachers exposed their own Religion, they had never drained the Theatres; and if our Modern

dern Pulpits will drive that Trade, the Theatres will drain *the Water*, if not *draw the Grist* from their Mill; for they know how to expose Religion more ingeniously, and more effectually.

But what other issue must we expect, when some Clergy-men shall *frequent*, others *plead for*, and justifie the Play-houses; when the Bears, with their Decent, and Harmonious Bagpipes; the Fencers with their ratling Drum, shall find fair Quarter, shall have free ingress, egress, and regress, when yet some Christian Assemblies are disturbed, and broken in pieces.

We poor folk, are apt to think, that we may venture a step or two nearer the brink of the Pit, than our Teachers, and take a little more Latitude than our Guides, for they are well paid for their Gravity, whilst we must be forced to be sober and austere at our own proper cost, and charges. It has been an old observation: If Ministers be *merry*, the people will be *mad*; If they *drink*, their people will be *drunk*; if they argue for *the lawfulness* of Theatres, and other such *Nurseries* of good Learning, the people without scruple will *frequent* them: And then have a care in good earnest, lest the *Stage* plunder the *Pulpit*; and the *Theatre* drain the *Christian Assemblies*, more effectually than the *Conventicles*.

8. *The Holy Men of those times that approach'd our Saviour, had as it were some Rayes of his Divinity upon them, and their Faces shone*, &c. And would he indeed have these times talk of *Rayes*, and *Beams*, and *Shinings of Face*? On purpose perhaps, because they want new Matter for *Ecclesiastical Burlesq*; and *Canonical Drollery*! One such Expression as this dropt from *the Tongue or Pen of a Dissenter*, had been enough to equip out a whole Fleet of *Friendly Debates* for a Summers Expedition: But yet he has qualified it pretty well; they were but *some Rayes*; and *as it were some Rayes*: And that may mollify as dangerous a word as this, and save the Primitive Times a Satyr.

9. *A Christian Church was then a Colledge of Holy, and Good Men*: Incomparable Proof, that all Churches were either then *Cathedrals*, or at least *Collegiate*: And truly they might have continued so still, had not *Remissness* of Discipline in *just Causes*, and *Severity* of Discipline in *slighty Causes* endangered to make them *a Den of Thieves*.

If the *Church doors* were strictly guarded, and the *Church windows* narrowly watch'd, that none might come in by *the one*, nor climb in by *the other*, that are unqualified: If *Simoniacal Buyers, and Sellers*, were soundly *whip'd out*, which have bribed their Admission by *the Golden Key*, and none denied Entrance that claime Admission upon *Christs Terms*, such as can produce Testimonial Letters, from a sound Faith, and Holy Conversation, the *Church might still be a Colledge of Good and Holy Men*: But if some must be forced in, in spight of their Teeth, though as unfit as Ignorance, and prophaness can make them; If like the *Americans* they must be *compelled to go to Heaven upon pain of death*; If others be *excluded* by the Palizadoes of Ceremonies, however meet Materials, for such a Constitution,

tution, never hope the Church should be *a Holy Colledge*, but a *Lazarhouse*; for they that are of *no Religion*, will be of *any Religion*, rather than be *undone* for being of *none*; and they that are really of *any Religion*, will endeavour to go to Heaven in *better company*.

And such were the beauties of the *Prime-primitive Confessors*; but now there is a sad Degeneracy; and that the Reader may not suspect I envy our Authors Abilities, I shall give him a taste of his Excellencies in exposing *the Modern Piety*.

1. *Now dry Opinions are taken for Faith.* Oh what a lucky hint had here been for one that was so *inclinable* to be ingenious? For *dry Opintons* (you know) are very *combustible matter*, which will catch at the *smallest Spark*, and therefore must needs set the whole World in a flame.

But 2. *Men have been busy in making New Creeds, and have forgotten to practise the Old.* Whence Note (for your Learning, and singular Edification, that though some mistake *the Creed for a Prayer*, yet it will serve without sensible error for *the Ten Commandments*: And yet perhaps *practising* a Creed is not so easy a matter as he may imagine: Let Men but *believe* their Credenda, and *practise* the Agenda, and they shall never be Reproach'd by me, for not *practising their Creed*, whether it be *Old or New*.

I am very confident the Innocent Reader takes it for granted, that the Enquirer has all this while been *comparing the Piety of Ancient days, with that of the Present*, as it stands at home *amongst our selves*: But he's meerly gulled; for all this gawdy Eloquence has been spent upon *forrein Countries*. *Such* (says he) *is the condition of the Greek, and Latin Churches*. There 'tis, that they *are so busy in making New Creeds that they have forgotten to practise the Old.* Just as if one of *Jobs Messengers* should cry out in the streets, *Fire! Fire!* And one startled at the Alarm, asks, *Where? Where?* Oh at the *Escurial!* At the *Escurial!* in *Spain*, near *Madrid*! Nay then we are well enough! I was afraid it had been my next Neighbour *Ucalegon*; and therefore I hope we may have time enough to remove our Goods. But Reader, be not too secure, for the Sparks are already flown over into *England*: *If we come nearer home* (says he) *I doubt we shall not find things much better.*

Here is one piece of *Justice*, or *Charity*, which I must here *demand*, or *beg* of my Reader; and 'tis this. That if the Enquirer has a priviledge to suppose *his Scarefire beyond the Seas*, I may be allowed the priviledge to suppose, that *my poor Bucket was bestowed there also*; and that though the Tragedy of *Mustapha* was acted in *London*, yet the Scene was laid at *Constantinople*.

That *the Brittish Churches were so famous for Religion in the first Times of their Plantation*; I am right glad to hear, and hope the News is true: But the *Evidence*, *and the Consequence* do both exceedingly trouble me: *The former* is *slender*, that if we touch it

not

not very *gingerly*, like the Apples of *Sodom*, it will moulder into duſt, and the *latter* is ſo dangerous, that it concerns him to handle it gently, leſt it prick his fingers. And 1. for the Evidence; If *the preſence of the Britiſh Biſhops at the Council of* Arles, be his beſt proof, it muſt proceed thus. *The Britiſh Biſhops were preſent at the Council.* Their *preſence* muſt preſume their *ſubſcription to the Articles*; Their *ſubſcription* muſt imply *a virtual, and implicit conſent* of the *Britiſh Clergy*; and then the *conſent of the Clergy* muſt involve *the Approbation of all the Churches*: And laſtly, *the Churches Approbation of the Articles* muſt infer, that they practiſed their *Creed*, and that their Lives were ſo eminent for Holineſs, that they *did as it were ſhine with ſome Rayes, or Beams of Divinity.* And here is a Teame of connected inferences, that if one fails, the concluſion will be left in the Mire. And therefore he has another proof to help it out at a ſtanding pull: *At the Time of the* Nicene *Council*, Britain *was accounted one of the Six Dioceſſes of the Weſtern Empire.* And then no Rational Creature can deſire clearer demonſtration, that they were eximiouſly Holy; for if they were of any Dioceſs, *firſt*, *or ſixth*, it makes no great matter, provided it be but of the *Weſtern Empire*, it will infallibly conclude their Piety; though it had been more clear in my mind, had it been *a Dioceſs* not of the Empire only, but *the Church.* And then 2. for *the Conſequence*, that ſeems very perilous; for if the *preſence of the Britiſh Biſhops at the Council at* Arles implies their *Subſcription*, and that *Subſcription* the *conſent of the Clergy*, the *Clergies conſent* the *Approbation of the People*; and that infers their *Holineſs*: Then (ſay ſome) the *Preſence of the* Engliſh *Divines at the Synod of* Dort, and their *Subſcription to the Articles*, will imply the *conſent of the Clergy*, and the *conſent of the Clergy* the *Approbation of the* Engliſh *Church*; and there's no remedy for it that I can ſee. If the preſence of *the one* will evince the Kingdoms *Sanctity*; the *Preſence, and Subſcription of the other* will much ſtronger evince *the Kingdoms Orthodoxy*: For *Subſcription* is a *good ſtep* beyond *bare Preſence*, and ſo our *Premiſes are ſtronger*; And *Sanctity* is a *good ſtep* beyond Truth in *the Underſtanding*, and ſo our *Concluſion* is *more modeſt.*

We are now coming *to lower Times*, to the Catholick Times of Popery: And Religion holds *very good* ſtill, and *runs clear*; but there's no help for it, he muſt *tilt it*, or it will *run Dregs* in the Reformation.

The Inhabitants of this Iſland (ſays he) *have not been more famous for Martial Proweſs, than for Sincere Piety, and Devotion*: For Polydore Virgil, *an* Italian, *and* Eraſmus *a* Dutchman, *both of the* Roman *Communion, and* (therefore be ſure) *competent Witneſſes, affirm there was more true Devotion, and Sincerity of Religion in this Church, than in any one place of the World beſides*: Auditum admiſſi, Riſum teneatis? I have known a ſober Horſe break Bridle upon a far leſs provocation: We will for once,

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to gratifie this Enquirers longing, ſuppoſe that *there was more true Piety, and ſincere Devotion amongſt the* Engliſh *Papiſts*, than among the *Albigenſes*, and *Waldenſes*, than in *Bohemia*, or wherever elſe the Goſpel had begun to dawne; but that *Polydore Virgil*, and *Eraſmus*, ſhould be *competent Witneſſes*, and *therefore competent Witneſſes, becauſe of the* Roman *Communion*, does a little ſtumble me; and that becauſe it has ever been as *the Intereſt*, ſo *the Religious Practiſe* of thoſe in Communion with *Rome*, to Magnifie thoſe in Communion with Her, and as much to depretiate the Holineſs of all thoſe that had once withdrawn themſelves from her corruptions.

The Argument, ſuch as it is, proceeds thus. They that were of the *Roman* Communion, muſt needs be ſuppoſed competent Witneſſes of the truth of the Devotion, and ſincerity of the Religion of thoſe of the ſame Communion; but ſuch, and ſo Qualified were this *Polydore Virgil*, and this *Eraſmus*, and therefore they muſt needs be ſuppoſed *Teſtes Legales*, competent Witneſſes of the Truth of the Devotion, and ſincerity of the Religion of thoſe of the ſame Communion, and ſuch at that time was the Church of *England*: And the ſtrength of the Argument depends upon ſome old ſtable Maximes, which like the κοιναὶ ἔννοιαι are never to be denied: As that, *Aſk his Fellow whether he be a Thief?* And *Birds of a Feather are impartial in blazoning one anothers Vices.* But yet if he will define Piety, by Superſtition, and Religion by blind Zeal, and Devotion by hood-wink'd Obedience, Charity by a Merit-mongering Humour, laying out it ſelf in uncommanded Fopperies, idle Self-Macerations, Idolatrous Maſſes, Foolhardy Pilgrimages, Dirges, Trentalls, Obits, Requiems, and ſuch like Traſh, and Trumpery; I will not contend. Let *Eraſmus*, and his fellow *Polydore* paſs for irrefragable Evidence, and the Piety of thoſe days out-ſhone that of their Contemporaries, and Succeſſors amongſt the reformed Chriſtians, *Quantum inter ignes Luna minores.*

Well, but yet *the Univerſal Paſtor obſerved the Sheep of* England *to bear ſuch good Fleeces, and ſo patiently to ſubmit to the Shearer, that he kept a Vigilant Eye over his Flocks, and his Vigilancy was Rewarded with the Golden Fleece.* This indeed quite ſhames the preſent Age, and dazles our Eyes with the Luſtre of thoſe Brighter Times. And here we are acquainted with two Notable Secrets, I. That *the Piety of the* Engliſh *Sheep*, then lay very much *in patiently ſubmitting to the Shearer.*

And ſurely were men but ingenuous to confeſs a known truth, they could have no cauſe to reproach *the preſent piety of the Engliſh Sheep upon* that Account. What they could deſire more of the *poor Sheep* then *the Fleece*, unleſs they would *flea off the skin*, and eat the *fleſh*, I cannot imagine. And that can be no profound policy in the Paſtor; for the *Fleece of the living*, will give more then the *skin of the dead*; Its much better Husbandry to ſtrip them *yearly of their Coats*, then once for all *to cut their Throats*;

Threats; and it has past for wholsome Doctrine in the days of Yore, *Boni pastoris est pecus Tondere, non deglubere.*

But 2. Another deep point is this, That the *vigilancy of the Pastor* consists in looking strictly after the *fleece of the Flock*. In which particular I know no reason why the vigilancy of *former times* should be so Idolatrously predicated above that of *our own*.

We are come at length to *the times of the Reformation*; and whilst he engages in a just, and sober commendation of them, there's none shall more chearfully keep pace with Him, provided always he gallop not too fast, and ride us quite out of Breath: And the Glories of our English Reformation were as followeth.

1. *It was the most orderly, not brought in with Tumult, and Sedition, as most changes are.* Let God alone have the glory of so great a mercy! And such was this; though indeed the Excellency of a Reformation, lies *not only*, or *chiefly* in the *still and silent manner* of its Introduction, but in its Harmony with the Primitive Rule of Reformation, which is to Reduce all things to their Divine Patterns and Originals: *Peace* is mainly valuable for *purity*; And the freedom from noises of Axes and Hammers in the building of *Solomons* Temple, was, that they might more severely attend to their Archetype. Where God gives Reformers *more peace*, he expects from them *more purity*; And if they may work *the safer*; he expects they should work *the better*: It were great ingratitude to God if we should account our Gospel cheap, because it came to us so: And as much vanity to boast how our Ancestors got it, unless we can produce it as pure as they left it to us peaceable.

2. *It was the most Moderate, and Temperate.* Moderation is a virtue very much commended by those who never intend to exercise it. As an old griping Usurer commends his Coin so highly, and loves it so dearly that he will not part with one penny. The Reformation might be Moderate in a twofold Acceptation; either first, moderate in our *departure* from Error and Corruption; or secondly, Moderate, and Temperate in our *approaching* to the word of God: Now to resolve to be moderately reformed either of these ways, ought not to be Recorded amongst the Glories of a Church: There are few that would be moderately Rich, moderately great; they fear no excess that way; all the danger is, least we should be too immoderate, and unreasonable in obeying Christs Commandments, and conforming to the Apostolical Churches. The measure of our love to Christ, is to love him without measure; The degree of our Obedience is to obey in the highest Degree, and the Bounds of our Conformity to the Gospel, to set our selves no Bounds but what Christ has set us; Gods Praise can suffer no *Hyperbole*, his Love need fear no *Paroxysme*: As he that presumes he has *Grace enough*, may do well to question whether he has *any Grace*; so he that is so confident he is *Reformed enough*, shall tempt others to suspect he is very *little Reformed*: There's more danger of being *Lukewarm* in Reforming, than *Scalding hot*; and though it be easie to be *over righteous* in imposing our own Inventions, it will be impossible

to be so in imitating Gods Prescriptions: But amongst all the kinds of Moderation that were in the Reformation, one small quantity more of *Moderation towards their Brethren* would have sweetned all; and yet they say that wanted not at first, but is since much decayed. But the Moderation of the first Reformers appears.

§ 1. In that *they did not purge out the good, because it had been formerly abused, as the Humour of some is.* This indeed argued their singular prudence, and discerning Spirit: But yet there are some things *not evil in themselves*, but made so by abuse, which without imputation of Humorists they might have purged out. And this was *Hezekiah's* Humour, (if it must be so called) who made the Brazen Serpent a *Nehushtan*; and scarcely that, when once it had been abus'd to Idolatry, which yet had more to plead for it self, than those *Good Things*, of which our Enquirer is *so Tender*. I mean the Signature of an old *Jus Divinum*.

Whatever is *good in it self*, or made so *by Divine positive Law*, and shall afterwards be abused to *superstitious* ends and uses, we must take some pains to scowr off the filth, and file away the rust, and to wash away the soil that it has contracted, and to vindicate it to its Native Beauty, and Integrity; but for *the Inventions of Men*, I know no such service we owe them, to lie always scrubbing, and scowring, and rinsing, and when all's done, their obstinate, and inveterate Leprosie, like that of *Gehazi*, will never be fetch'd out: And this was the Humour too of Bishop *Andrews*. Serm. on *Phil.* 2. 20. *Whatsoever is taken up at the Injunction of Man, when it is drawn into Superstition, comes under the Compass of the Brazen Serpent, and is to be Abolished.* And the Catholick Moderator, who was a greater Friend to *Moderation*, than *Reformation*, was partly of this *Humour* too: *When the occasion of a Humane Constitution ceases, and the Abuses remain so great; it's no time to wink at them any longer.* To stand pecking at Abuses which have eaten themselves into the substance of *an old Custom*, is like the endless labour of weeding Ivy out of an old rotten Wall, the only way is to dig down the Wall it self: Nay the great Legislator of the *Jews*, commanded them utterly to abolish all the Instruments, and Utensils of Idolatry, and not to dally in Lopping, and Pruning, but to chop them up by the Roots: Thus *Lev.* 18. 3. *After the doing of the Land of Ægypt ye shall not do, and after the doings of the Land of* Canaan *ye shall not do, neither shall ye walk after their Ordinances; ye shall do my Judgments, and keep my Ordinances.* And whether he will call this a *Humour* or no I know not. But this I know, *R. Moses, Ben. Maimon*, with whom agree no small Names, assures us, that this was one Reason of many Negative Precepts given to the *Jews*, *as not to Round the Corners of their Beards; not to wear a Garment of Linsey-woolsey, nor to sow their Ground with divers Seeds; not to eat the Fruit of their Trees for the three first Years*, &c. Namely that they might *not Symbolize with the Idolatrous Nations*,

Nations. Nay further, if this was *a Humour*, the Church of *England* is not ashamed, was not ashamed to own her self of it, in her discourse prefix'd to the Liturgy. *The most weighty cause of the Abolishment of certain Ceremonies was their Abuse*: She knew well, that what was bred in *the Bone*, would never be got out of *the Flesh*; That which was naught in *the Egge*, will never be good in *the Bird*. It's not washing, but burning, that must cleanse *the Garment spotted with the Flesh*. And therefore she routed whole Legions of these Pompous Trinkets, and had doubtless scattered *the Reserves*, and brought up *her practise*, to *her own Rule*, had not some *Tender Hearted Moderate Persons* stood by, wringing their Hands, and weeping for *Tammuz*; Oh *deal gently*, *deal gently* with the poor distressed Ceremonies, for their Fathers sake.

§ 2. Another Specimen of their Moderation is: *That they did not Abolish a Venerable Order, or Office in the Church, for the ill manners of them that bore it.* What *Venerable Order*, *or Office* this should be, because he is not so open-hearted as to acquaint us, I have something else to do with my Conjectures than to throw'em away upon such desperate uncertainties: If it was *an Order* of Christs Institution, *the ill manners of those that bore it*, might well warrant the thrusting *them* out of the *Office*, but not the *Office* out of the *Church*: But if it could not justly plead *his Authority*, no *pretense of Usefulness* to some Imaginary Ends of I know not what Unity, and Order, will conciliate to it the Honourable Epithete of *Venerable*, or secure its station in the Church of Christ: As Christ, the only Law-giver of his Church has made abundant provision of *Offices and Ordinances* in his Church, to suit and Answer *all the Necessities* of Believers; so of *Officers* too, to discharge those *Offices*, and administer those *Ordinances*, and there is no need of Mens over-officiousness to supply his pretended defects either in the one kind, or in the other. Indeed we pray, that it would *please the Lord of the Harvest to thrust in more Labourers* for *Number*, but not for *Kind*: They who shall assume to themselves a power to create *New Offices*, may, by parity of Reason, claim an Authority to Erect *New Officers*; for it's a thousand pities, that any but *Humane Officers* should be put to the toyl to Celebrate *Humane Ordinances*; or that any of *Christs Ministers* should be put to the drudgery to administer any but *Christs own Ordinances*; for indeed they have their hands full of work enjoyned them by their Lord, and Master, and can neither spare *time nor strength* supernumerary to expend in superfluous Exercises: As Christ has annex'd *no promise of his Presence* to any but his own *Servants*, so no *promise of success* to any but his own *Services*: He that runs upon Christs Errand, his Master will bear his Charges; He that runs upon his own Head, or the Heads of others, for ought I know must bear his own: It's a scandalous impeachment of the unquestionable Love Christ always bore to his Church, once to imagine that he has not either provided *work enough* for his

Labourers, or that he has not apportioned *Labourers enow* for his *Work*. The same Reproach will it be to *his absolute Sovereignty* over the Church, either to pretend to supply his *defects, and shortnesses*, or to institute *New Officers, and Offices*, which plainly *imply* it.

If it were only *Vitium personæ*, the removing the scandalous, had been a Plaister broad enough for the Wound; but if it proves *Vitium Rei*, you may *purge* all the Officers into *their Graves* before you can *purge away the evil of the Office*, which like *Tartar*, is so Baked, and Crusted to the sides of the Vessel, that till you knock off the Hoopes, and take the Frame in pieces, no Art of Man will free the Cask from a tang, at least of the old mustiness.

§ 3. *They were not of Opinion, that the Church could not arrive at Primitive Purity, unless it were reduced to Primitive Poverty: Purity, and Poverty*, I must needs say do Rhime so sweetly, that no wise Man would have lost the Melodious Chime of two such Harmonious words for a small matter: But what if the Church never propounded the *Primitive Purity* for her *Pattern*? If she did, she has run all the things in Controversie out of Distance; yet this I will say, That if ever the Church be reduced to Primitive Purity, without some such humbling Providence, and Refining Dispensation, which purged the Primitive Christians from their dross; or the effusion of *such Measures of Grace*, Humility, Self-denial, Condescension, as may *Answer Primitive Poverty*, very wise Men, and her very good Friends are much mistaken.

§ 4. Their Moderation appears in this. That *though they found some Ceremonies then used that were superstitious, and dangerous, and thought too many burdensome*, yet *concluded not all Decency in the Service of God was Popish*. It had been a Conclusion wild *to Frenzie*, to infer that all Decency was Popish, because some Ceremonies were superstitious: Nay, though they all were so, and had accordingly been discarded: But this had been a sober and moderate Conclusion, That because all Popish Ceremonies were superstitious and dangerous, the Worship of God might be Decent without them: Gods Service was Decent before *they were born*, and would be so again, if they were all *in their Graves*, as well as *dead, and rotten*. And if those Decent Ceremonies had *a Decent Burial*, it were an Honour as great as those of a Nobler Extract, I mean Divine Ceremonies had bestowed on them: I would seriously enquire of our serious Enquirer. 1. If *some* Ceremonies were Abolished, because they were *superstitious, and therefore dangerous*, why all the rest were not served with the same sawce, that were *equally, or more* superstitious, and therefore more dangerous? I think it's demonstrable, that all the superstition that ever stuck to *Holy Water, Cream, Salt, Spittle, Oyl*, was Innocency, to that horrid abuse of *the Sign of the Cross*. But 2. If the Superstitions of the remaining Ceremonies were capable of separation from them, why might not a little Oyl, and Elbow-greace have been bestowed on the rest, and their Lives saved? It seems most of the Ceremonies were knock'd oth' head, because

cause they would not go to the charge of Rearing them. 3. If many Ceremonies were a Burden, whether were not *half of that many, half as great a Burden*, and so *pro rato*? And if so, where was the Churches Commission to impose *any unnecessary* Burden upon the Necks of Disciples. 4. If some of the old superstitious Ceremonies (when well scraped, and wiped) were left for Decency, and Comelinesse in the Worship, why where not the rest scummer'd up, that the Worship might be *mere Decent*? For if *Two or Three* Innocent Ceremonies will add a Decency, *Two or Three* hundred will have burnish'd it to such a Lustre, as must have either ravish'd, or blinded the Eyes of all Beholders? 5. Who shall infallibly assure us *just how few* will be *no Burden*, and the imposing of them *no sin*? and yet *one more* shall make *them all burdensome*, and so the imposition of them to become *sinful*? Or *just how many* to an Unite will render the Worship *Decent*; and the adding of *one more* render all Deformed? If the Church; then why might not the Church of *Rome* in her days have Determined the Question? Especially seeing that of all pretenders, she alone challenges an infallibility, which is the most considerable thing in this Case, when the Church must carry her hand even, and cut by a thred, between Decency, and Indecency; A Burden, and no Burden? 6. If the Church has a power to impose *a load*, (though a *lesser load*) has she a power to communicate *strength*, though it be but *little strength*, to bear that *little*? Especially seeing the Burden here must not lie on the *Back*, but the *Heart*; not on the *Shoulders*, but the *Conscience*: She that pleads an Authority to *Institute*, can she produce a power to *Bless what* she Institutes to any Spiritual End? This encouragement we have from Christ, whose perogative it is *to impose*; that he will give Grace to bear what *he imposes*, and thereby make *his Yoke easie, and his Burden light*. *Qui mihi est Oneris Author, idem erit Administrationis Adjutor*, said Leo: And so *Austin*. *Da quod jubes, & jube quod vis*. If any Church could *incline the Heart towards her Testimonies*; or give *a Heart to keep her Statutes, Judgments, and Commandments, and do them*; or make her *Commandments not grievous*: Let her multiply Ceremonies, till she is weary, and spare not; Let her use her *Discretion*, and we shall use nothing but *Submission*. But this *dead weight* sinks our Spirits quite. 7. Whether is not such an assuming power exceeding dangerous *in its Consequences*; for upon this Principle the Church may impose a round thousand of Ceremonies, if she will say, and think them decent, and *the Crow thinks all her young ones White*, and all are fond of the Brats of *their Brains*, as well as the Issue of *their Bodies*; yes, and *Ten Thousand more*, if she will but decree they are *not burdensome*; which she is the less a Competent Judge of; because *Superiours* who command, do not feel that load, which *Inferiours* who must obey, do groan under: *So much of the Moderation of the Reformation.*

3. *The* English *Reformation was the most perfect, and compleat in*

its kind. The perfection, and compleatneſs of a Reformation, is to be taken from its *Agreement with its Rule, and Idea*, which (ſay we) is *the Word of God*, and to this we do unmovably adhere, till we have good ſecurity that they have found out a better: All *Perfection* with us, is but *Defection*, and all compleatneſs, *Fancy*, which is not meaſured by *that Rule*: It will therefore be the great Glory of the *Engliſh* Reformation to acquit it ſelf well in this point, wherein our Enquirer will endeavour our ſatisfaction.

1. For Doctrine. *This Church retains* (ſays he) *the moſt Ancient Doctrine, and ſoundeſt Confeſſion of Faith founded upon the H. Scripture*: That the H. Scriptures are the foundation of Faith, we gladly hear ſome intimation of, and ſhall lay up the conceſſion againſt another time, whether the Church has attended to this Rule in her Doctrinals, belongs to another Diſcourſe.

2. For Government: He tells us, The *Engliſh Reformation retains the moſt Primitive Church-Government.* Theſe things, are wiſely, and warily penn'd, (thought I:) *A Scripture Creed*, and a *Primitive Church-Government*! Confeſſion founded *on H. Scriptures*, and Government founded on *a word called Primitive*; why ſhhould we not have *a Confeſſion* founded on ſomething elſe *than Scripture*, as well as *a Government*? Or why not a *Church-Government* founded on the Scripture, as well as *the Doctrine*? So that he has provided well for *the Doctrine*; but for *the Government* it may ſinck or ſwim for any Relief it can expect from our Enquirer, except a hard word will do it: *Primitive Antiquity*, is one of thoſe *Stulta Amuleta qua Controverſia collo appenduntur ut Armilla Maleficarum*; Potent Charms, and Pompous Enchantments not to *Cure*, but *Conjure down* a Controverſie; for ſince *Primitive* may be taken *in a Latitude* of three, four, five, or (for time of need) ſix hundred years after Chriſt, it would be very hard if any Crotchet, Humour, and Fancy had not ſet up for it ſelf in that time, which ſhall be enough to entitle it to the Warrantie of the Primitive times: Let him therefore prove it *Scriptural*, and ſo *jure Divino*, and he has ſaid more to me, than if he had run up its Pedigree through a Dozen or more Centuries: But is not this ſhort word [The moſt Primitive Church-Government] a foundation too narrow for that High Boaſt, *p. 2. That our Church is of a ſound, and healthful Conſtitution, I think I have ſufficiently, though briefly manifeſted in the Introduction.* Briefly and ſufficiently? The Two moſt deſirable Qualifications in Argument and Evidence that may be! And ſurely it muſt de brief enough, which is comprehended in this one Sentence: *The* Engliſh *Reformation retains the moſt Primitive Church-Government*: but whether it be *ſufficient or no*, let the Reader look to that.

3. For the Liturgy. *That is* (as he thinks) *the Beſt accommodate to reconcile, and unite Mens Devotions.* And how well it has anſwered its end, and the deſign of its Inſtitution. I ſhall ſay the leſs, becauſe others will ſay the more; ſome ſay it has *diſtracted*

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more *Devotions*, than ever it *united*: And others; That it has accommodated them as much as could be expected from *a Humane Contrivance*, that had no more of Christs *Authority* for its institution, and therefore could expect no more of *his Blessing* for the success. That this, or any other Liturgy was an Expedient appointed by Christ to *unite Mens Devotions*, he may explain, and attempt the proof of at his best leisure: But that Christ has not been wanting to his Church in leaving her *the proper and sufficient means* for the advancing of *Devotions*, and uniting *affections* we are satisfied, and so fully contented, that we shall seek no further.

That Protestants *in the days of* Edw. VI. *did Rejoyce in the Liturgie*, Dissenters will not deny: An *English Liturgie* left free, was better than a *Latin Mass*: *Half a Loaf*, was much better than *no Bread*: To them who had been in such *Darkness*, *and Bondage*, *any Light*, *any Liberty* were most grateful. The first Original of Liturgies (as is express'd in the *Preface to our own*) *was*, *that the whole Bible should be read over* (or the greatest part of it) *once every Year*; *intending thereby*, *that the Clergie*, *and especially such as were Ministers of the Congregation should by often reading*, *and meditation of Gods Word*, *be stirred up to Godliness themselves*. — *And further*, *that the People*, *by daily hearing of the Holy Scriptures read in the Church*, *should continually profit more in the Knowledge of God*; — *But these many Years past*, *this Godly*, *and Decent Order of the Ancient Fathers hath been so alter'd*, *broken*, *neglected*, *by planting in uncertain Stories*, *Legends*, *Responds*, *Verses*, *vain Repetitions*, *Commemorations*, *and Synodalls*, *that* &c. *And moreover*, *whereas St.* Paul *would have such Language spoken to the People in the Church*, *as they might understand*; *and have profit by hearing the same? The Service in this Church of* England *hath been read in Latin to the People*, *which they understood not*, *so that they have heard with their Ears only*, *and their Heart*, *Spirit*, *and Mind have not been edified thereby*. From hence we are evidently taught, First, that the true Original of Liturgies, was only an Order for the Methodical Reading of the Scriptures for the benefit of an ignorant Clergy, and sottish People; and Secondly, that that wherein the Reformers gloried to have out-done Popery, and edified the People, was, that they had procured them their Worship in a Language understood.

When therefore I hear these Popular Harangues: *How happy this Church and Nation was in* Edw. VI. *days*: *In what Glory and Majesty the Prince Reigned*, *in what Peace and Concord the Subjects lived*, *how Devout*, *and Pious an Age that was*: I am ready to think, that as the Graves of Patients do hide the faults of Physicians, so the follies and vanities of those days are buried in their own graves too; for Dr. *Heylin* had almost perswaded me. That *the death of that Prince was none of the Infelicities of the Church of* England. But our Enquirer has set him right again; and his days were the Golden Age of Reformation, his Reign

the Glorious Pattern of Peace, and Concord; and so shall continue till the next occasion those Men have to reproach the Reformation, and then *Edw.* VI. days shall be *an Inselicity* again, and as great a prejudice to Religion as ever. So easie it is for a cunning Orator with his orient Colours, to fill up the wrinkles of a furrow'd Face, and again to deform the most Beauteous Complexion, just as it pleases Master Painter.

The total summe of all, is thus much. The Primitive times were Glorious for Piety; in *Polydore Virgil*'s days, and those of Popery, there was a great deal of *Sincere Devotion*; In the beginning of the Reformation, affairs were in an excellent posture, but *now* all's degenerated, and a Lukewarm Neutrality, and Lazy Indifferency, has over-spread the Face, and crept over the Heart of Religion. And what should be the matter? What is the Reason of this sad change? Why! Men are not so fond of Ceremonies as they used to be, and People have resolved against the building of Churches, and endowing them.

But let us hear him *Lament the change*. All *Zeal* then, *cold Indifferency* now. Then all *Harmony*, now all *Discord*. *Then the Society of the Church was so venerable, that to be cast out by Excommunication, was as dreadful as to be Thunder-smitten: But now it's become a matter of some Mens Ambition to be cast out. Then few, or none, but frequented the Church; now the Church is become the Conventicle, and the Conventicle the Church, as to frequency. Then the Liturgie, and publick Prayers were counted a principal part of Gods Worship; now they see nothing without a Sermon. Then there were few things that were scrupled; but now its become the great point of Sanctity to scruple every thing.* It will be time for me, and the Reader, to take our leave of this learned Introduction, when we have observed, and returned a few things. 1. That the true Reason why there is *more Discord now*, than at that time, is, because there are *more difficult terms of Peace, and Concord*. Several things were then *in use*, which were not *imposed*: Many were permitted to discharge their Ministerial Functions without subscription to *the new terms*, and conditions of Communion: It was pretty well in Queen *Elizabeths* Reign, before *A. B. Whitguift* could strain Conformity to it's height; and yet they are now screwed much higher. Restore *Indifferent things* to their *Ancient Liberty*, and we shall soon arrive at our *Ancient Amity*. 2. That Excommunication has so much lost its former Authority upon the Conscience, and become so like a *Brutum Fulmen*, is to be imputed to these Reasons. 1. Because that Thunderbolt is darted out for meer trifles, some have been delivered over to Satan for a Groat; Now it's a sure Maxime, That *nothing will bring a Law sooner into disuse, and contempt, than the Disproportion of the penalty to the Offence*: It will be difficult to perswade weak understandings, that that can be of God which has but *one sort* of punishment for *all sorts of Crimes*, and the same Rigour for *Vertues*, as for *Vices*: To be delivered up for a *Penny*, exposes to the same inconvenience as if it were a *Pound*;

Pound; and it shall fare as ill with him that scruples at *a Ceremony*, as with him that commits Whoredom; and some say, *the former* has more evil in it than the *latter*, though you throw in Drunkenness, Swearing, and half a dozen more such into the reckoning. 2. It has been made an Engine, to gratifie some Mens Passions, and exonerate their Spleen upon the Innocent; and nothing renders *Jupiters Thunder* more despicable, than when the wretched *Salmoneus* shall dare to imitate it. 3. It has been so frequently practised in pecuniary matters, that Men discern it not to be a Spiritual Weapon; Money has been a Lock to shut Men out of Heaven, and a Key to let them in again. 4. They that have been ejected by that *Charm*, find no evil consequences in their ejected state. In the Primitive times it was therefore terrible, because Christ abbetted his own Ordinance, administred for his own Spiritual Ends, in his own Regular way; but now Men dare not trust Christ with his own work, but have supplied his vengeance with a *Significavit*, a Writ *de Excommunicato Capiendo*, delivering Men over to the Sheriff, whom thereby they call the Devil by craft, but otherwise the Excommunicated Person *eats his Bread, and drinks his Wine with a Chearful Heart, because the Lord has accepted him.* 3. That so few frequent the Church, is, because they have either been scoffed, or railed, or beaten out of doors, or barred out by Conditions, not comporting with Scripture Rule, and Warrant. Men know that Christ must be their Judge; to him they must give an account of their Souls, and Worship, in the Great Day; and therefore they are willing to Worship God according to his Will revealed in his Sacred Word, unless any can give them Counter-security to save harmless, and indemnifie them before his dreadful Tribunal; And if they must suffer for such resolved adherence to a Scripture Religion, they have only this humbly to reply. *Da veniam Imperator, Tu Carcerem, Ille Gehennam. Christ threatens a Hell, the Law only menaces a Goal.* 4. That the Liturgy was then *counted a principal part of Gods Worship*, we cannot help: We judge, that none but God can make *the least*, much less *a principal part of Gods Worship*: God only knows which way he will be Worship'd with Acceptation: And it is our great Happiness, that he has acquainted us with that Will of his in his Word, to which we apply our selves for our Directory, and are not sollicitous about Apocryphal Rubrics. *As to matters concerning Religion, Nature Teacheth no further, than the Obligation to the Duty; but leaves the particular determination of the manner of Obedience to Divine Positive Laws:* So we are instructed from the Author, of *Origin. Sacræ*, p. 175. 5. That *it is now become the great point of Sanctity to scruple every thing*; was not spoken with that regard to Honesty and Truth, as might have been expected from *a Compassionate Enquirer*: They scruple being Holier than Christ has commanded them, wiser in matters of Religious Worship, than the Scriptures are able to make them: They scruple giving up their Consciences to those whom they see no great reason to trust, till better evidence be

given how they regard their own: They ſcruple all Retreats in Reformation, and all Retrograde Motions towards Evangelical Perfection and Purity; and they with our Enquirer would ſcruple a little more this overlaſhing, *That it's an Eſſential part of ſome Mens Religion to be Conſcious*; And *a great point of Sanctity to ſcruple every thing*. Let him then continue to Lament the change, and we will pray that God will make a more through change, reducing Doctrine, Worſhip, Diſcipline to the Word of God, the only Rule of Reformation.

PART. I.

CHAP. I.

A Sober Enquiry into the Apocryphal Cauſes of Nonconformity, pretended by the ſerious Enquirer: St. Auguſtin, and the Synod of Dort *Vindicated; the Articles of the Church of* England *Cleared. The Learning, Preaching, and Converſations of the N. C. modeſtly juſtified, againſt the ſcandalous Reflections of the pretended Compaſſionate Enquirer, but without Recrimination.*

AFter a very ſhort Epiſtle, (or to ſpeak Canonically, that which ſtands *inſtead of the Epiſtle*) to *very little*, and a tedious Introduction to *much leſs purpoſe*, the Enquirer falls full drive upon *the Cauſes of the ſeparation from the* Engliſh *Reformed Church*. In imitation of the *French* Embaſſadors Muſicians, who would needs give the Grand Seignior *a fit of Mirth*; but were ſo cruelly tedious *in tuning their Fiddles*, that the Sultans Patience was quite worn out, and he could not be perſwaded to hear the *firſt Leſſon*.

Now the Cauſes are either *Apocryphal, and pretended*, or *Canonical, and Real*; and it's a wonder to me, when his Invention was once broached, that he did not feign this for *another Cauſe* of ſeparation, that ſuch Heterogeneous Cauſes ſhould be bound up together *in the ſame Volume, and Covers*.

For theſe Apocriphal Cauſes, let it not beget *another ſcruple*, in your Captious Heads, whether they are *pretended by Diſſenters*, or only *pretended by this Enquirer*, to be amongſt their *pretences*; for it will come all to one, there being *ſome collateral matters*, which it ſhall go hard but he will *entice*, or *force* into the Diſcourſe, or elſe the Reader might have ſung *whoop Barnaby*! and Retreated to his Recreations, the *longeſt Holy day in the Year*.

1. The very first of these pretended Causes, is *some Blame they lay upon the Doctrine of the Church, and the main (if not the only) thing excepted against in this kind is, That the Thirty Nine Articles are not so punctual in defining the Five Points debated in the Synod of* Dort *as they could wish.* Just as your *common Hackney Versifiers*, or *Water Poets*, make one Verse for *the Reason*, and the other for the Rhime sake, so was *this Objection* mounted against the Doctrine of the Church for the sake of his *precious Answers*, wherein he will *find or make* as handsom an occasion, as impertinency will admit to vilifie St. *Austin, and the Synod of* Dort.

It will be extreamly difficult to give our Enquirer a satisfactory Answer in this Point. Shall we say, This is not *the main thing* in the Articles *excepted against by Dissenters?* He will readily Reply, However then you tacitly grant, that this is *one of your little Cavils:* Shall we say, This is not the *Only thing* they scruple; he will return nimbly. Then it seems you confess this to be *one*, though not *the only thing* you Boggle at: Really if I knew how to content him I would do it; and the best expedient that offers it self at present is this Answer. 1. That the Church has *other Doctrines*, not contained in the 39 *Articles*, imposed on the Faith of *Subscribers*; and perhaps the scruple may lie against *them*. 2. That the 39 *Articles* contain *other Doctrines* besides those *relating to the five Points debated at the Synod of* Dort, as that of *Art* 20. *The Church hath power to decree Rites, or Ceremonies.* And that of *Art.* 34. *Every Particular, or National Church hath Authority to Ordain, Change and Abolish Ceremonies or Rites of the Church ordained only by Mans Authority.* And what now if the quarrel should lie against *one of those.* And I am the rather induced to suspect they may hesitate in these particulars, because I have heard some of them privately Speak, and seen others publickly Print, that though they can *practise* such things, which being in their own Natures indifferent, remain under all their concurrent Circumstances lawful; yet they cannot find where the Church has any Commission to impose them: They can assert, and use their *Christian Liberty*, and yet cannot subscribe to *the Doctrine of the Churches Power* to take it *away*. 3. That the most rigid Calvinists do not scruple Subscription to the Articles, so far as they relate to the Quinquarticular Controversies; and for a clear experiment herein, for once let the Church make *those Articles only*, the *single Rail about the Communion Table*, and we shall soon see such Multitudes of Dissenters crowd into the Constitution, that she will hardly find two Benefices a piece for them.

It's my greater admiration, that they who deny *Particular Election, Original sin*, the interest of Christs death in *Reconciling God to us*; that they who assert *Justification by our own Works, Freewill*, &c. can subscribe them; and indeed it seems they swallow'd them with some Reluctancy, and are now reaching and straining, with many a sowr face, to Degorge, not the *Bait*

of the Benefice, which is infinitely *ſweet*; but *the Hook of the Article*, which is unmercifully *ſharp*.

This pretended Pretence then might ſafely have been forborn, but that the Lapwing thinks it adviſable to raiſe a huge cry, *where 'tis not*, that we may not ſearch where *really it is*; to make a clampering about the Non cauſes, to divert our Enquirers from the true and proper cauſes of Non-conformity: Like the ingenious policy of the Thief, that being arraigned for *a Horſe*, freely confeſſed the ſtealing of *a Bridle*, but prudently concealed it was upon *the Horſes Head*.

But (ſays our Enquirer) *though this neither needs nor deſerves an Anſwer, yet I ſhall reply Two things to it*: That is, he will give us *Two needleſs Anſwers* to *One needleſs Objection*.

1. The ſumme of the former needleſs Anſwer is thus much. *Common Arts, and Sciences, which depend upon Humane Wit, and Invention, are capable of daily improvements; but Chriſtianity depending ſolely upon Divine Revelation, can admit of no new diſcoveries. The uſefic Wit of Man may perplex, but it can never bring to light any New Thing; for if we admit of any New Revelations, we loſe the Old, and our Religion together; we accuſe our Saviour, and his Apoſtles, as if they had not ſufficiently revealed Gods Mind to the World, and we incur St.* Paul's *Anathema which he denounces againſt him, (whoſoever it ſhall be, nay if an Angel from Heaven) that ſhall Preach any other Doctrine than what had been received.*

The Enquirer may call this *a Needleſs Anſwer*, (for who ſhall hinder him from calling *his own* what he pleaſes) but I aſſure him it contains a great deal of Needful Truth, which had he like a good Husband improved, the reſt of his Book had been more needleſs than this Anſwer: *Needleſs* we confeſs it to be as to *the Objection*, which was it ſelf *needleſs*, but not ſo for his own *Confutation*; for thus the Diſſenters will come over him: *If neither Time nor the Wit of Man can make any New diſcoveries in Chriſtianity*; then the Pope, who like another *Columbus*, or *Americus*, has made Great and New diſcoveries in the *Terra Incognita* of Tradition and Ceremonies, muſt either be a God, or a Devil. That the Liturgy was *a principal part of Gods Worſhip*, he has told us in the Introduction, that it was diſcovered from the beginning, and not by later Adventurers, he will be ſore put to it to prove, for all *the Muſty Fragments* of St. *James's Liturgy*: That it was not part of the Wiſdom of Chriſt, or his Apoſtles, we are well enough ſatisfied: That there was Wit and Invention in it, we confeſs, all the Queſtion is, whoſe Wit ſhould have the glory of the Invention. Again! *If to admit New Revelations be to loſe the Old, and our Religion together*: Let us make a ſhort Quæry upon't, whether *to admit of New Ordinances, and Conſtitutions, be not to loſe the Old, and our Religion together*? That is, whether Goſpel Inſtitutions be not exclusive of new ones, as well as Goſpel Revelations? and why we may not expect a new *Credimus*, as well as a new *Mandamus*? New Revelations as well as

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New Injunctions? *A New Prophet* of the Church seems to me as necessary as *a New King* over the Church, and *a New High-Priest* as needful as either: And I proceed upon this Principle, that *the Law* of Christ was as perfect as *his Discoveries*: He has told us as fully, and clearly what we should *do*, as what we should *believe*: He that may invade *the Royal Office*, upon pretence there are *not Laws enough* for the Government of the Church, may with equal appearance of Reason invade the Prophetick Office too, upon pretence there are *not Revelations now* for its instruction: And therefore the vigilant universal Pastor has found it as necessery to supply *the defect of Revelations*, by *his own Traditions*, as the nakedness *of Worship* by *decent Ceremonies*.

As Jesus Christ vindicated *the Moral Law* from the false Glosses of the Scribes and Pharisees, so he superadded *a Ceremonial Law*, depending meerly upon his own fulness of Power, and Authority; now what right any can pretend, to *add new Particulars to his Ceremonial Law*, which they may not also pretend, to add to his *Moral Law*, I cannot Divine: And therefore one of our Enquirers great Friends, who had his Eyes in his Head, and saw farther into these matters than his poor Neighbours, was constrained to assert a power that had lain dormant somewhere of adding *New Particulars to the Divine Law*.

But further; *If New Revelations do accuse our Saviour, and his Apostles, as if they had not sufficiently revealed Gods Mind to the World*: Then new ways of teaching Gods Mind, new invented Symbolical Ceremonies will accuse him, and them of the same culpable failure in not discharging those Offices, committed by God to a Mediator, and by him to his Apostles.

And in short; *If we incur St. Paul's Anathema, which he denounces against him that shall Preach any other Doctrine, than what he has received*: Then they will do well to get out of the way of that Curse who Preach this Doctrine, The *Church has power to decree Rites, and Ceremonies*: Unless they be sure they have received it from Christ, for its but ill venturing to stand in the way of an Angel with a drawn Sword; more terrible than which is one of the Scriptures Anathema's: Some will ask where, and when, and from whom the Church *received that Doctrine* which some Preach, *viz. A Power to impose Mystical, and Symbolical Ceremonies, as the Terms of Communion* with a Church; but I shall only say, that our compassionate Enquirer will need a most compassionate Reader, upon these Two Accounts: First, that he makes *an Objection* for Dissenters, which is their Answer: And Secondly, that he gives *an Answer* to *that Objection*, which is their *very Objection*; but yet we have not heard the Conclusion,

The Consequence (says he) *of these Premises is; That the elder any Doctrine of Christianity can be proved to be, it must needs be truer; and he that talks of a more clear Light of the latter Times, and clearer discoveries in Religion, talks as idly as he that should affirm he could discern things better at a miles distance, than a Man*

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that hath as good an Eye as himself, and yet stood close by the Object. This is that *Needless Conclusion* drawn out of his *Needless Premises*, and having discovered the weakness of *the former*, I might leave him at his leasure to deny *his own Conclusion*; but yet I shall give him some Items about that also. And 1. It's a crude unconcocted Notion, that *the elder any Doctrine of Christianity is, the truer it is*: For it was a Truth *that Christ was Born*, before it was that *he was Crucified*; and yet the former Article, that he was *Born of the Virgin* Mary, is no truer, than that *he was Crucified, Dead, and Buried*: The Truth of the Doctrine depends not upon its *Antiquity or Seniority*, but upon *the infallibility of the Revealer*, quo ad nos, and upon *the close connexion of the Terms*, in it self, whether a Truth was revealed by Christ, or his Apostles immediately inspired, all are of equal Truth in themselves, and equal Authority as to us; that is, the lateness of the Revelation will breed no difference. 2. The Enquirer might have informed himself; that there is a double Light, *an Objective*, and *Subjective Light*: The former is the discovery of *the Thing it self*, the latter is *the enlightning of the Faculty*: It's true there is, there can be no *New Objective* Light rationally expected: In this sense all *New Lights* are but *Old Darknesses*; but yet there may be *more Subjective Light*, or a greater discovery made to us of what God has discovered in his Word: The Papists lock'd up our Bibles in the Latin Tongue, and kept the Key of Knowledge in their Pockets: God by his Gracious Providence in the Reformation; has taken off the Embargo, and restraint that was upon Knowledge, and great Light is sprung in amongst us, we say not God has put more Books, or Chapters, or Verses into the Bibles, but that he has given us more light in our Minds; he has not Revealed *New Truths*, but given us advantage *to discover the Old*. Thus the Learned *Stillingf.* somewhere expresses himself. *The common way of the Spirits illuminating the Minds of Believers, is by enlightning the Faculty, not by proposition of New Objects*: A Man then may *talk of more Light in these latter Times*, and yet *not talk idly*; if by *more Light* he intends no more than a clearer understanding of Gods Mind, and Will revealed in his Word; and a Man may *talk of more Light in these latter Times*, and *talk very idly*; If thereby he means, *more Revelations* of Gods Mind and Will to supply the defects of the Scripture; but yet none *talk so idly*, as the Rhetorical Men, whose Premises speak against *New Objective Light*, and their conclusion against *New Subjective Light*. If Subjective Light be *not capable of growth*, if it does not *recipere magis & minus*: Let him give me a Reason why the Churches Articles of 1571. do clear up the Doctrine more darkly, and imperfectly laid down in the days of *Edward* VI. Refined Silver is more clear, than the same Mettal in the Oare, and yet there is no more Mettal. But if it be capable of growth, and increase; what an idle flourish is his Similitude of *a Mans seeing better at a distance, than he that stands close by the Object*: For if we have got no *further Light* into the Scriptures by all the

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Advantages which Merciful Providence has furnish'd us with above *the darker Times of Popery*, they were very ill bestowed upon us; and he that would repay him in his own Coyn might tell him; That a Man may possibly stand *too near the Object*, as wel as *too far off*; and *a Dwarf upon a Gyants Shoulders may see further than the Gyant himself.*

What he has hitherto philosophiz'd upon, has been little to our Edification; nor had we been troubled with *this first Messe*, but for the sake of that which is now to be served up in *the second Course*; and that is, a piece of Revenge that he will take upon St. *Augustin*, and the Synod of *Dort*.

¶ 1. And first, here's a heavy charge drawn up against *one Augustin*, of whom I presume the Reader may have heard at one time or other some mention made. Now this *Augustin* (or rather *Austin*; for his Name, as well as his Fame suffers a Syncope) has been formerly a person in great danger of incurring that Curse denounced against those *of whom all Men speak well*, till of late some Charitable Divines, loath to let a Poor Man lie in Purgatory from Age to Age, when a few bad words would release him, took some pity on him: And one of his best Friends in this Nation is this *Compassionate Enquirer*, who informs us, *That no Father, or Writer Greek or Latin before this* Austins *time agreed in Doctrine with the Synod of* Dort, *which is so notoriously plain that it cannot be deny'd. And if he agrees therewith, yet it's certain, that in so doing he disagrees as much with himself as with us of our Church: That he was indeed a Devout Man, but his Pity was far more commendable than his Reason, and that being hard put to it, by the* Manichees, *on the one hand, and the* Pelagians *on the other, he was not able to extricate himself; and that he was rather forced into his opinion, than made choice of it.*

He that shall thus confidently dare to censure that worthy Father, must be presumed to have read over his Voluminous Writings, with all those of *the Ancient Writers before him*, both *Greek and Latin*, to a Man, to a Sentence, which might sufficiently have proclaimed his Learning, and recommended him to a Patron, (one would think) though he had never reproached that Father himself: Many a poor Hungry Man have I known in my little time, that has scribled one piece after another railing at the Pope, which yet never turned to such Account, as half a score Lines smartly penn'd against *this great Sinner* Austin. And yet for all these Insinuations of Industry in Reading, and Acuteness of piercing Wit, in hunting and tracing *the Poor Man* through all the windings, and turnings of his self-perplexing Contradictions; it's our meer good Nature if we will believe, that ever he saw any more than *the back side* of St. *Austins* Works; for indeed all this may be no more than an ingenious Paraphrase of their great *Grotius*, who thus spends his Judgment upon him: *Discuss. p. 97.* , Ut dicam quod sentio puto *Augustinum* adeo , non cum prioribus, ne secum quidem per omnia posse conci- , liari: Ita contranitendi studio, se in illas Ambages induxit ut

, non

, non invenerit, quâ se extricaret; Paucis Scripturæ Adductus , Locis, quæ facilè commodam interpretationem recipiunt, aliis , locis, & pluribus, & clarioribus, per quæ Deus significatur , omnium salutem velle, interpretationes det violentas, & nunc , has, nunc illas, incertus quò se vertat; ut dicam aliquid am- , plius fuit utilis *Augustinus* ad monita danda piæ vitæ, ad inter- , pretandas Sacras Scripturas satis in fœlix.

When I first read this dismal charge against *Austin*, It minded me of our common forms of Indictments against *Breakers of the Peace*; how they did *Vi & Armis, with Bills, and Staves, and Swords, and Guns, make an Assault, and Battery*, when it may be all the out-cry is for no more than a *Fillip*, or a sorry *Box o'th' Ear*.

But what will the Reader say, if all this Bluster, and Clamour which our Enquirer has borrowed upon *Grotius* his word, and the Publick Faith, be no more than what *Grotius himself* has borrowed from *the Pelagians* who were bound in their own defence to reproach his Person, before whose Arguments they durst not stand; and who being the great oppugners of *the Grace of God*, must needs hate him who was its great *Propugnator*. I read indeed in *Marius Mercator*, p. 103. That *Theodorus*, Bishop of *Mopsuestia*, the Dad of the *Pelagians*, did at this rate nibble at *Austins* Learning: , Sed nihil illorum perspicere potuit, Mira- , bilis peccati Originalis Assertor, quippe qui in Divinis Scriptu- , ris nequaquam fuerit exercitatus, nec ab Infantiâ, juxta B. , *Pauli* vocem Sacras didicerit Literas; sed sive de Scripturæ sen- , sibus, sive de Dogmate sæpius Declamans, multa frequenter in- , epta, propriè communitérve de ipsis Scripturis, Dogmatibusque , plurimis impudenter deprompsit. *But this wonderful maintainer of Original Sin*, (Austin) *could set none of all these Things; being a Person not at all exercised in the H. Scriptures: Nor one that had (according to St.* Pauls *saying) learn'd the Scripture from his Childhood; but frequently Declaiming whether of the meaning of the Scriptures, or of some Opinion, he oftentimes utters many fooleries, at all Adventures, Hab-nab, concerning the Scriptures, and many Points of Doctrine.* But yet let us hear the Indictment against *Austin*, in its several Branches.

§ 1. One Branch of the Charge is; That he was a Novelist in the weightiest Points of Religion. *No one Father, or Writer, Greek or Latin, before his time agreed with him.* A deo non cum prioribus posse conciliari: *And this is so plain, that it needs no Proof*; further than the bare say-so of *Grotius*) *nor can it be denied.* There's your Charge! There's your Evidence! These are indeed *Big words*, utter'd with that confidence which Men commonly assume, that would be believed in an unproved falshood; for I will suppose *Vincentius Lirinensis*, that *Malleus Hæreticorum*, to have understood the Sentiments of former Ages, as well as this Enquirer, or *Hugh Grotius*. Now he tells us (*Cap.* 34. *adversus hæretic.* Quis unquam ante Prophanum illum *Pelagium* tantam virtutem Liberi præsumpsit Arbitrii, ut hoc in bonis Rebus per Actûs singulos adjuvandum, necessariam Dei gratiam non pu- , tares?

, taret? Quis ante prodigiosum discipulum ejus *Cælestium*, Reatu , prævaricationis *Ada* , omne genus Humanum adstrictum ne- , garet? *Who ever before that prophane wretch* Pelagius, *ever pre- sumed the power of Free-will to be so Great, as not to judge the Grace of God necessary to help it, in all good Things, even in every particular Act?* *And who before his monstrous Scholar* Cœlestius, *ever denied that all Mankind stood guilty of* Adams *Apostacy from God?* When *Irenæus* Bishop of *Lyons*, had excellently discoursed of Original sin: How that we were wounded *Antiquâ Serpentis Plagâ*, with the *Old Blow of the Devil*. And how that Adstrictum est Humanum genus Morti per Virginem, *viz.* Evam. *That all Mankind was bound over to Death by the Transgression of* Eve: And Protoplasti peccato, vinculis alligati eramus. *We were all bound in Chains of guilt by the sin of* Adam *the Protoplast*. St. *Austin* made use of this Testimony. *Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 2. *contra Jul.* , Videsne , Antiquum Dei Hominem, quid de Antiqua Serpentis Plagâ , sentiat? Quid de similitudine Carnis peccati, per quam sana- , tur plaga Serpentis in Carnes peccati? Quid de Protoplasti , peccato, per quod alligati eramus. *Do you not Observe* (says *Austin*) *what that Ancient Man of God thinks of that old Blow given us by the Devil? What his Judgment is, concerning the likeness of sinful Flesh*, (Christ Incarnate) *by which the Wound of the Serpent in our sinful Flesh is healed? And what his opinion is touching the sin of the Protoplast, by which we are all guilty?* And *Origen* against *Celsus*, *Lib.* 4. agrees exactly with him ἡ ἀρὰ τοῦ Ἀδὰμ κατὰ πάντων ἐστὶν· οὐ γὰρ τῆς γυναικός, ἧς οὐκ ἐστι καθ' ἓν ἃ νῦν λέγεται· *The curse of* Adam *is common to all Men, and there's no Woman of whom it may be said what was said of the first Woman.* So *Nazianz. Orat.* 3. *de Pace.* Ἐχρὴν γὰρ με ὅλον σωθῆναι, ὅλον πλαισιωτὰ, ᾧ κατακέκριται ἐκ τοῦ πανταπάσι πεπτωκότος, καὶ ὅλου τῆς ἀπειθείας; *I have need to be wholly saved, who am wholly lapsed, and condemned by the disobedience of* Adam, *and the subtility of the Devil.* And *Austin* quotes *Chrysostom* to prove both the influence of the first *Adams* disobedience, upon our Condemnation; and that of Christs obedience upon our Acceptation with God. Ὅταν λέγῃ σοι Ἰουδαῖος, πῶς ἐκ τοῦ κατορθώσαντος τοῦ Κρίσπου ἡ οἰκουμένη ἐσώθη; δυνηθὶς αὐτῷ λέγειν, πῶς ἐκ τῆς παρακοῆς τοῦ Ἀδὰμ, ἡ οἰκουμένη διεφθάρη; *When a cavilling Jew shall object, How can the World be saved by the Rectitude, or Obedience of one Christ? Answer him again, by asking him; How came the World to be condemned by the disobedience of one* Adam?

I shall give the Reader no further trouble in this matter; *The Greek and Latin Fathers* were either of *Austins*, or *Pelagius* his mind, if they were of *Pelagius* his opinion, then he has at once Canoniz'd them for *Orthodox Pelagians*; but if they were not of *Pelagius* his Mind, (for I know no *Medium*) they were of *Austins*, and by consequence of the same Judgment with the Synod of *Dort*.

St. *Hierome* indeed says expressly, *That before that Southern*

Devil

Devil (he means *Arius*) *appeared in the World, the Ancients spake many things in the simplicity of their Hearts, and not so advisedly, which might give some Advantage to the Heretick*; And *Austin* will confess, That *Ante Mota Certamina* Pelagiana, the Fathers seemed to speak favourably of *Free-will*; but afterwards *multò diligentiores, vigilantioresque facti sunt*, they began to *bestir themselves, and watch over their words a little better*: Now as it would be a severe Charge upon all the Primo-primitive Fathers, that they were *Arians*, because a suspicious word at sometimes drop'd from their Mouths, or Pens, so would it be a rash, and ignorant Censure of them, that they were all *Pelagians*, because some odd expressions fell from them, which may seem to favour Pelagianisme: And therefore I am in hope, since *Pelagius* is risen from the Dead, this sleepy Age will awake, and give him no ground by unwary Expressions; at least we expect thus much, that Non-conformists may not be ruined, because they are no wiser than *Austin*.

§ 2. A second Branch of the Charge is, That St. *Austin Agrees not with himself*. A pitiful sorry self-inconsistent Scribler he was it seems, that could not make his matters hang together: One that caper'd backwards, and forwards, that it was the easiest thing in the world to trip up his heels, such a Novice was this *Austin*; all which I could easily believe, when it shall be proved, that he wrote *the first and second Part of the serious Enquiry*. Really, that Man must have amassed a vast stock of confidence, that shall hope with one puff of contemptuous Breath to blow away that fair heap of Repute that that Fathers Name has gathered in so many Centuries; and he must have an over-weening conceit of his own Rhetorick, that can presume to perswade this Learned Age, that he was so insignificant a Ceremony, so great a Trifler: The Papists with incredible zeal have struggled for him; the Protestants have tooth and nail wrestled to draw him into their Tents; all parties have ambitiously courted his suffrage; at last comes one *Hugh Groot*, and our Enquirer, and they cashier him as an inconsiderable fellow not worth the whistling.

But *Luther* had this great Stone thrown at his Head by *Bellarmine*: And the Learned Dr. Field thus puts by the Blow. On the Church *Book*. 3. Ch. 42. *Luther* (says he) *was as worthy a Divine as the World had any in those Times, or in many Ages before, and that for clearing sundry Points of greatest moment in our Christian Profession, much obscured, and entangled before with the intricate disputes of the Schoolmen, all succeeding Ages shall be bound to Honour his Happy Memory: That herein he proceeded by degrees, and in his latter Writings disliked that which in his former he did approve, is not so strange a thing. Did not* Austin, *the greatest of all the Fathers, and the worthiest Divine the Church of God ever had since the Apostles time, write a whole Book of Retractations? Did we not carefully observe what things he wrote whilst a Presbyter, and what*

what when made a Bishop? What before he enter'd into the Conflict with Pelagius, *and what afterwards? Did he not formerly attribute the Election of those that were chosen to Eternal Life, to the fore-sight of Faith, which afterwards he disclaimed as a meer* Pelagian *conceit?* And would it not vex a Man of our Enquirers Humour, that *Austin the Presbyter* should be more Orthodox, than *Austin the Bishop?*

The Truth is, St. *Austin* disagrees no more with himself, than it became *a Wise Man*, who by long studying the Scriptures, and the Primitive Fathers, had gained a more concocted, and well digested Knowledge of Religion; his Retractations were never laid in his Dish, but interwoven amongst those Excellencies which Crowned his Learned Head, before Now. A piece of such self-denial it was, that a proud heart could not bear, unless more politick Considerations turned the scale; This last Age has few Instances of such an Ingenuity as will confess it self *Truths Prisoner*; though it abounds with too many that *surrender themselves Captives* to base Lusts, and worldly Interest: Their own *Grotius* professes he was *progressive*, and *very prone to dislike what a little before he was well pleased with*, and the Reasons of his Change were evident to all the World.

§ 3. A third Branch of this Charge is, *That St.* Austin *disagrees with the Church of* England. There are indeed a knot of Gentlemen, that *in spight of Right and Truth*, are resolved to be the Church of *England*, and with these St. *Austin*, and the Ancient Fathers have no very good correspondence, nor are they ambitious of it: But that the Ancient Church of *England* had very high thoughts of *Austins* Judgment, is from hence evident, that she quotes his opinion in one at least of the Articles of her Faith, and justifies her Authority from his Doctrine, *Art.* 29. But yet if the Church should be a weary of him, (as I am confident she never will) and has no further service to command him, 'tis but transmitting him with Letters of safe Conduct into *Holland*, where the Divines of the Synod of *Dort's* perswasion will give him better Quarter, and a most Cordial welcome, and there's no harm done.

§ 4. Another Branch of this tedious Charge is, *That he was a Devout Good Man, but whose Piety was far more commendable than his Reason.* Fuit utilis ad monita danda piæ vitæ, ad Scripturas interpretandas satis infœlix: That is, *The Man was a well meaning Zealot?* One that according to his dim light meant honestly, but he never had wit enough to write *Obscene Annotations upon the Canticles*; he poor Man was little versed in *Anacreons* Ribaldry, nor had much studied *Ovid de Arte Amandi*, he was a meer stranger to *Catullus*, and *Martial*; and therefore must needs be *Satis*, nay *Nimis ad interpretandas Scripturas infelix*. The most wretched unhappy Creature that ever bungled at a Text of Scripture. It was never my unhappiness but once to hear the learned *A. B. Usher* reproach'd, and it was by a Grave divine

divine of the ſame Temper, and upon the ſame Account: That *the Primate was indeed an Honeſt Man, but one of no depth of Judgment.*

We need not ſearch far for a Reaſon, why theſe Men cry down *Auſtins Reaſon*: In ſhort, 'tis but to be reveng'd on him for crying down *theirs*; for there's a certain Malepert ſawcy thing, as blind as a Beetle, and as giddy as a Gooſe, which they have Nick-named Reaſon, and this *Auſtin* decries with ſome ſeverity. Thus the Learned *Jewel* againſt *Harding*, *Art.* 4. *Diviſ.* 17. obſerves, That *Auſtin* ſpeaking of the Scripture judging Myſteries, by Reaſon, ſaith thus. „Hæc conſuetudo periculoſa eſt, per Scripturas Divinas enim multo tutius Ambulatur: *And again.* „Si „Ratio contra Divinarum Scripturarum authoritatem redditur, „quamvis acuta ſit, fallit veriſimilitudine, vera enim eſſe non „poteſt. *If Reaſon be brought againſt the Authority of the Scriptures, though it may ſeem acute, and witty, yet 'tis but fallacious under the ſhadow of Truth, for 'tis impoſſible it ſhould be True.* And for this he quotes, *Ad Marcellinum Ep.* 7. And let the Reader have a ſpecial care of the Quotation, for *the Eccleſiaſtical Politicians* ſake.

But that our *Auſtin* was no ſuch *Shallow-brain'd-fellow*, no ſuch *half-witted-piece*, as thoſe Divines judge it their Intereſt to repreſent him, I ſhall call in the Teſtimony of *Jerome*, one whoſe Learning, and Judgment may at leaſt counterballance thoſe of *the Enquirer*. *I have always* (ſays he to *Auſtin*) *Reverenced thy Holineſs! Increaſe in Vertue! Thou art Famous through the World: Catholicks Reverence thee as the Re-builder of the Ancient Faith*; And I promiſe you he muſt be no Blockhead, that ſhall be able to Redintegrate the Ruinous Doctrine of the Chriſtian Church: But I ſhall knock all dead with an *infallible*, and therefore *irrefragable* Teſtimony; 'tis no leſs I aſſure you than that of *Cœleſtinus Biſhop of* Rome: *We have always accounted* Auſtin *a Man of Holy Memory, for his Life, and Merits of our Communion, whom we have long ſince remembred to have been of ſo great Knowledge, that he was amongſt the beſt Maſters.* It would be impertinent to tell you, how *Paulinus* Biſhop of *Nola*, calls him *the great Light ſet upon the Candleſtick of the Church*; or how *Proſper* gives him the Character of *a very ſharp Wit, clear in his Diſputations, Catholick in his Expoſitions of the Faith*: But to what purpoſe ſhould we control him with inferior Evidences after that of *a Pope*? or to what end Subpœna our little Witneſſes after theſe Grandees? For ſurely he that will break *Auſtins Pate*, will not fear to daſh out *Proſpers Brains.*

§ 5. Another Branch of this endleſs Indictment is; *That being hard put to it by the* Manichees *on the one hand, and the* Pelagians *on the other, he was not able to extricate himſelf. Se in illas Ambages induxit, ut non inveneret quâ ſe extricaret.* You ſee, I hope, that if ever we ſhould want an able Head to tranſlate *Grotius* into *Engliſh*, our *Enquirer* is the Man: Never was poor Man ſo bewildred, ſo ſadly intangled in the Bryers, as this

this *Auſtin*, between the *Manichaan fatal Neceſſity*, and the *Pelagian Contingency*; one while he's juſt a ſplitting upon *the Scylla of Free-will*, and whilſt he goes a Point or two too near the Wind, he's ready to be ſwallow'd up of the deſperate Gulf of *Stoical Neceſſity*. I ſhall ſay no more; let the Reader ſeriouſly peruſe St. *Auſtins Works*, and when he has done, ſtudy *this Enquirers Volumes*, and by that time he may be ſatisfied, whether all his Rhetorick, and Confidence, will make him a competent Judge of St. *Auſtins* Learning.

§ 6. His Concluſion of his Charge is; *That he was rather forced into his Opinions, than made choice of them.* He whoſe Tongue is his own, may employ it how he pleaſes; but this ſlander carries its Confutation, as well as its Confidence in its Forehead. 'Tis as if we ſhould conclude; That Men become *Enemies*, becauſe they have *ſhed one anothers Blood*; whereas moſt think they wound, and ſhed one anothers Blood, becauſe they were *firſt Enemies*: It was the Zeal of this Learned, and Holy Perſon, for the cauſe of God that put him upon Study; that drew him out in the open Field againſt the open Enemies of the Grace of God, who might otherwiſe have ſlept ſecure in a whole skin; Diſpute cleared up Truths to him, but he was not forced from any, or into any, I ſhall conclude this Head, with that of *Bradwardine*, another famous Champion in the ſame Cauſe with *Auſtin*. „Ecce enim quod non niſi tactus dolore Cor„dis refero, ſicut olim contra unum Dei Prophetam, octingenti„, & quinquaginta Prophetæ *Baal*, & ſimiles reperti ſunt, qui„bus & innumerabilis populus adhærebat; Ita & hodiè in hâc „cauſâ, Quot O Domine, hodiè cum *Pelagio*, pro libero Ar„bitrio contra gratuitam gratiam tuam pugnant, & contra *Pau„lum* Pugilem gratiæ ſpecialem? Exurge ergo, Domine, ſuſtine„, protege, roborа, conſolare; ſcis enim quod nuſquam virtute „mei, ſed tuâ confiſus, tantillus aggredior tantam cauſam. *Behold! (which I cannot mention without grief of Heart) as of old againſt one Prophet of God, eight hundred and fifty of the Prophets of* Baal, *and ſuch like, were found, to whom a great multitude of People did adhere; ſo in this Cauſe. How many O Lord at this day contend for Freewill, with* Pelagius *againſt thy free Grace, and againſt St.* Paul *that Famous Champion of Grace? Ariſe therefore O Lord! uphold, defend, ſtrengthen, comfort me; for thou knoweſt that not truſting to my own ſtrength but thine, ſo weak a Combatant has engaged in ſo great a Cauſe.*

¶ 2. His ſecond aſſault is againſt *the Synod of* Dort: A Task as *needleſs* as the *Anſwer* it ſelf, and ſuch as will not quit for coſt for having already routed *Auſtin*, this poor *Synod* muſt fall in' courſe with him, and be buried under his Ruines.

That it was *a Dutch Synod* I cannot deny: *Dort* is, and always was in the Province of *Holland*, and therefore to pare off as much needleſs Controverſie as may be, let him Triumph in our Conceſſion, and make his beſt on't; *The Synod of* Dort *was a* Dutch *Synod*.

That

That *England was not within the Jurisdiction of* Dort, I shall easily admit, Nay, I can be contend that it be exempted from *the Popes Western Patriarchate*, if *Grotius*, *B. Bramhal*, and some others would agree to it. The Question then is, *How far the Church of* England *was*, *or is concerned in*, *at Agreement with*, *or obliged by the Decrees thereof?*

That *King James* sent thither several of his most Learned, and Eminent Divines, premunited with an Instrument, and thereby impowred to sit, hear debate, conclude upon those Arduous Points, that should be brought before them, I think is not denied; but by those who deny there ever was any such *Synod*. That they did according to their Instructions, go thither, sit there, debate upon, and at last subscribe to the determinations of that Convention, is also out of dispute: If their subscription did not *formerly oblige* the Nation, yet it evidently proves what was *the Judgment of the Nation*: Nor do I think it had been for the Honour of this Church to have been of that Religion, because those Delegates *had subscribed*; but they *therefore subscribed*, because they were in their own Judgments conformable to that of the Church, of the Religion and Judgment of the Council.

There had been formerly one *Baro* in the University of *Cambridge*, who delivered himself somewhat broadly in favour of the *Arminian* Novelties; Hereupon the Heads of that University, sent up Dr. *Whitaker*, and Dr. *Tyndall* to A. B. *Whitguift*, that by the interposition of his Authority those errours might be crush'd in the *Egge*, which were but *New-laid* as yet, and not *hatch'd* in the bosom of this Church. The Zealous Prelate presently convenes some of the most Judicious Divines of his Province, and *Nov.* 10. 1595. by their Advice draws up *the Lambeth Articles* coming up to, if not going beyond the *Dordretian* Creed: Forthwith he transmits these Articles to his Brother of the other Province, the A. B. of *York*, who receives, and approves them: So that now we have the *Primate of* England, and the *Primate of All* England owning more than virtually the Decrees of that Synod; and surely two such persons, *so learned*, as having been both of them Professors of Divinity in the University, and of *so great Power* in the Church, must be presumed, if any, to understand the true meaning of the 39 Articles *in the Five Controverted Points*. After all this *King James* allows the inserting them into the Articles of *the Church of Ireland*; and it were some what difficult to believe, that a Prince so wise, and learned, would allow that Doctrine for *Orthodox* in one of his Kingdoms, which was reputed *Heretical* in the other; unless we will say, they were erroneous at home, but purged themselves like *French-Wines* at Sea, by crossing St. *Georges* Channel; or that the malignity, or latent poison of them, was suck'd out by the sanative Complexion of the *Irish* Air, and Soyl: If then the substance of the Articles was owned, it's no matter whether the Jurisdiction of the Synod was owned: for I rather think, that the

Synod

Synod of *Dort* owned *the Doctrine of the Church of* England, than that the Church of *England* owned that *Synods Jurisdiction*.

I must here remember him of his own discourse in the Introduction; and desire to know whether he abide by that Doctrine he once Preach'd to us; *That the Presence of the* British *Bishops in the Council of* Arles, was good proof of *the Nations Piety*. Let him show how that Proof proceeds, and its very probable we shall be in a fair way to show him how the Presence of *the English Delegates* at the *Synod of* Dort, might imply, that the Church of *England* did compromise with it in the Points now in Question.

I confess I do not well understand the Mystery of one company of Mens making a Faith for another; but yet I may plead from an equality of Reason, that if the Non-conformists are bound up by the Decrees of a Convocation at *London*, where they have *no representatives*, the Church of *England* may be as well bound up by the Decrees of *Dort*, where she had *her representatives*. If it be said that this Church had *no equal Number* at *Dort* to make a full representation of her Body; it may be answer'd; that in the Convocation 1571. there was *no such equal representation* of the Clergy, nor any at all of *the People*, who have Souls to save, and Consciences to Account for, and ought not to be concluded in matters of Faith, by what *a Couple of Clerks* shall agree to, who are only chosen by the Parochial Ministers: I never saw a good Argument to this day, to prove, that the people ought to Believe all that their Ministers Believe, or that the Ministers are bound to hold all that their *Representatives* shall subscribe, seeing it cannot be supposed that they give them *so large a Commission*; and if they should, it were actually void, because they give away *their Consciences*, which are none of *their own*.

How things are now I know not well, but in former times a Convocation has been judged *no equal representation*, either of the inferior Clergy, or the Body of the People. In the lower house of Convocation, there have been in some Dioceses, one Dean, one Clerk for the Cathedral, three or four Archdeacons; and for the inferior Clergy of the whole Dioces, only Two Clerks to Counterballance all the rest. So that all things must of necessity be concluded according to the Temper and Interest of the Cathedrals, and that I think was *no equal representation*; but these things are inconsiderable. He comes now to draw up a Charge against, not *the Jurisdiction*, but the *Doctrine* of that Synod.

1. They were *such as knew not how God could be Just, unless he was cruel, nor Great, unless he Decreed to Damn the far greater part of Mankind*. A company of silly Souls I perceive they were, and their Heads just of the same size with St. *Austins*: But in my poor judgment they took the wrong end of the Staff; for it had been much he harder task *to make him Just*, if he were *first supposed Cruel*; but this is one of those Chymerical Consequences, which the persons of this distemper, and prejudice, use when their Blood is up to fasten upon the Principles of the *Calvinists*. It was an Ingenious Observation of the Author

of

of *Orig. Sacr. p.* 10. where he assigns this as one cause of errour: *To question the soundness of Foundations for the Apparent Rottenness of the Superstructures*: For (says he) *There is nothing more usual than for Men who exceedingly detest some absurd Consequence, they see may be drawn from a Principle supposed, to reject the Principle it self for the sake of that Consequence, which it may be doth not necessarily flow from it, but from the shortness of their own Reason doth only appear so to do.* And if it were possible to perswade these Censurers to so much humility as to suspect they may possibly not be infallible, in *drawing Conclusions from other Mens Principles*; all this heat might be over: What the Synod of *Dort* asserts in this matter is thus much. *Art.* 15. , Deus Homines quosdam ex liber-, rimo, justissimo, & immutabili beneplacito decrevit in Com-, muni Miseriâ, in quam se suâ Culpâ præcipitârunt, relinquere, , nec salvificâ fide, & conversione donare, sed in vijs suis, & , sub justo judicio relictos, tandem, non tantum propter infide-, litatem, sed etiam Cætera peccata omnia, ad declarationem , Justitiæ, damnare, & æternum punire, In which, as there is nothing but what is *Just*, so there's nothing at all that is *Cruel*. 1. That Act of God which *our Enquirer*, for the greater Grace will call *a Decree to damn the far greatest part of Mankind*, the Synod calls *a Reliction of some Men*, or a *Decree to past by some Men*. *Quosdam Homines decrevit Relinquere*. 2. They say not that God Decrees to damn Men *absolutely*; but, Propter infidelitatem, & cætera omnia peccata damnare, *to damn Men for their Infidelity, and all their other sins*; which is neither injustice, nor cruelty. 3. They say indeed that God Decrees *to leave some Men in the common Misery*, but with al tis such as *whereunto they have thrown themselves through their own fault*. In communi miseriâ, in quam se suâ Culpâ præcipitarunt. 4. They say this is *an Act of Justice in God* to leave them to lie in that common misery, into which they had plunged themselves, it is *Justissimo Beneplacito*. So that all the difficulty will be to resolve, 1. Whether it be *an Act of Cruelty* in God to leave Man as he found him *in Massâ corruptâ; & damnabili*? And 2. Whether it be *an Act of Injustice* in God to damn Men for *their unbelief, and other sins*. If neither of these; it will be no difficult province to make it out, How God may be *just in damning Men for their sin*, and yet *not cruel in leaving them in their sin*.

I am aware that this whole Controversie at last must empty it self into that of *Original sin*. And a difficulty it is that may require *strong Heads* to prove, that will not bring *humble Faith* to believe, how Men have *plunged themselves into the common Misery*, wherein God leaves *those some*, by their own default, *Culpâ suâ*: But the Church of *England* will be responsible for this difficulty, who determines in her Ninth Article, *That in every Person born into the World it deserveth Gods wrath and damnation.*

The pretence for this odious Imputation, is nothing but *a Fancy*, which forsooth these great Masters of Wit have agreed

to

to call *Reason*. That that which would be *Cruelty*, *and Injustice in Man*, must presently be so *in God*: As thus, Because it would be *Cruelty*, and *Inhumanity in me* to see *my Enemy* (or if it were but *his Ox or his Asse*) lie in a Ditch ready to perish, and not to put forth a helping hand to pluck him out, that therefore it must be *Cruelty in God*, to see a sinner lie under sin, and its present Consequents, and not to deliver him from that state: Whereas we might consider that God has tyed us by the Laws of Charity and Interest to such Assistance; because we may possibly call for the same Assistance from others in our Miseries; but God is not so bound up, having once set his Creature on his legs, to raise him up as oft as he shall please to fall.

The vanity of this Reasoning wil more easily appear, if we take the pains (a little pains will do it) to put, and consider this Case. *Scelus qui non prohibet cum potest jubet*; 'tis *Seneca's* Maxime, and owned by all; That every Man is bound to prevent, and hinder all the wickedness he possibly, and lawfully can; now if we will *Measure God by this Rule*, we must conclude, that God is *unjust and cruel*, if he hinders not all the evil in the World, which he can possibly, and lawfully prevent: Nay, put the Case as favourably as you can, That God is bound to prevent all the wickedness of Mankind, as far as he can by *Moral means*, not exerting any Physical Influence upon his Creature, to impede its vitious propensities, yet this will not excuse him from *Apparent injustice and cruelty*, if *our Obligations* must be made the *Rule and Measure* of his: For he has not in many places of the World sent them so much as *the Preaching of the Gospel*, nor help'd them to *the best Arguments* against disobedience, nor propounded to them the *strongest Motives* to obedience.

The *Remonstrants* I perceive would gladly fasten this upon the *Contra Remonstrants*, that there is the same Reason, and Proportion between *foreseen Faith, and Election*, and *foreseen infidelity and disobedience*, and *Reprobation*. So Ames Coron. p. 27. *Paritatem quandam inferre conantur inter electionem, & reprobationem*. To which he thus returns: *Sed sine Ratione, privilegium enim exemptionis, & liberationis à pœnâ meritâ, benè potest aliquibus concedi, sine ullâ ratione Conditionis antecedentis, & impellentis; & pœna tamen cæteris infligi ratione sui meriti*, i. e. *The privilege of Exemption, and Deliverance from deserved punishment may safely be granted to some without any respect had to an Antecedent, and Moving Condition, and yet the punishment be inflicted upon the rest, on the Account of their own demerits*: So that he seems to have cleared what he had said, p. 14. *Interim advertere debent aliam esse Rationem infidelitatis ad Rejectionem; aliam verò fidei ad Electionem*. To shut up this discourse: If by Reprobation this *Enquirer* will needs understand *a peremptory Decree of God to damn any Man, without respect had to the violation of his Law*, the Synod is a perfect stranger to it: But if by Reprobation, they may have liberty to understand no more than they have a mind to, *viz. Gods purpose not to give Grace to some to whom he owes it not:*

As it ſpeaks *no injuſtice* in him, becauſe he was *not their Debtor*; ſo neither does it imply *any Cruelty*, if as *a Righteous*, *and Juſt Judge*, he puniſh them for *thoſe ſins*, which they commit for want of ſuch *ſpecial*, *and undeſerved Grace*.

2. A ſecond Charge againſt the Doctrine of that Synod is; *That they could not tell how Men ſhould be kept humble, unleſs they made him not a Man, but a Stock, or a Stone.* And yet the harder task had been to make him *Humble*, if they had made him either *a Stock*, *or a Stone*; And yet the harder task had been to make him *Humble*, if they had made him either *a Stock*, *or a Stone*; for it would have puzled them to Preach a Sermon *of Humility* with any *conſiderable ſucceſs* to ſuch an *Auditor*, though the *Legend* would perſwade us, that *Venerable Bede* had once, and but once, that Happineſs: But let the Reader hear what they ſay for themſelves, *Art.* 3, 4. §. 13, 16. „Sicuti poſt lapſum, „Homo non deſinit eſſe Homo, intellectu, & voluntate prædi„tus, nec peccatum quod univerſum genus humanum *pervaſit*, „naturam generis humani *ſuſtulit*, ſed *ſpiritualiter occidit*; Ita „etiam hæc Divina Regenerationis gratia, non agit in homini„bus, *tanquam truncis*, *& ſtipitibus*, nec voluntatem, ejuſque „proprietates tollit, aut in vitam violenter cogit, ſed ſpiritua„liter vivificat, ſanat, corrigit, ſuaviter ſimulac potenter fle„ctit. *As after the Fall, Man ceaſed not to be a Man, endowed with an Underſtanding, and Will, nor hath ſin, which overſpread all Mankind, taken away the Nature of Mankind, but only ſpiritually ſlain it. So alſo that Divine Regenerating Grace, works not in Men, as if they were Stocks, or Blocks, nor takes away the Will, and its Eſſential Properties; or compels it by force againſt its will, but ſpiritually quickens it, heals it, corrects it, and gently, but yet powerfully inclines it.* Hence it is clear, that this Synod were ſatisfied that God in the work of Converſion deals not with Men, as if they were *Stocks*, (and the ſame you may imagine of *Stones*) but the Queſtion then will be, whether upon this Hypotheſis, they knew how *to keep Man Humble*: Man indeed is a very proud Creature, and it may exerciſe the skill of the wiſeſt how *to keep him Humble* upon *the beſt Principles*; but of all that have undertaken this hard task, I moſt admire at their want of skill, that *know not how to keep Man Humble unleſs they knock him o'th' Head.* The knot of the Controverſie among the contending parties lies here.

The *Contra-Remonſtrants* aſſert. *Poſt Dei operationem, non manet in Hominis poteſtate Regenerari, vel non Regenerari*: So *Ames Coron. p.* 227. *After the Work of God* (*i. e.* his utmoſt Work that he deſigns in Converſion) *it remains not in Mans power to be Regenerated, or not Regenerated*; for they ſuppoſe that God does not leave his Work in the halves, but that before that effectual Grace, which proceeds from his purpoſe of Regenerating, does ceaſe to operate, the perſon is actually Regenerated; yet ſtill that in all the proceſs of this Glorious Work, he offers no violence to, commits no Rape upon the Natural Faculties of the

the Soul: The Remonstrants on the other hand assert, That , Positis omnibus operationibus, quibus ad Conversionem, in , nobis efficiendam, Deus utitur, manet tamen ipsa Conversio, , in nostrâ potestate, ut possimus non Converti. *Supposing the whole Work of God, which he uses to work Conversion in us, to be finished; yet still Conversion it self remains so far in our power, that we may not be Converted.* Which Principle seems clearly to ascribe Conversion not *to Gods Grace*, but to *Mans Will, and Strength*; it's the Man that *makes himself differ from another*: It's Man that *Regenerates himself*, when all is done that God does; and perhaps *our Enquirer* may have something to do to keep Man humble upon *this Hypothesis*: But whether of these Two Principles makes the nearer Approach to the Church of *England*, I mean that Doctrine which is express'd in the *thirty nine Articles*, let the 10. *Art.* judge. *The Condition of Man is such after the Fall, that he cannot turn, nor prepare himself by his own Natural Strength to Faith, and calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to do good Works pleasant and acceptable to God, without the Grace of God preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will.* Our *Enquirer*, will tell us by and by, *p.* 9. *That there has been little or no alteration made in the Doctrine of this Church, since the beginning of the Reformation*: And therefore I conclude, that there has been no alteration made from an *Anti-Arminian* to an *Arminian* sense; for that cannot be called *little or no alteration*: Now that this 10 *Art.* in the beginning of the Reformation, in *Edw.* VI. Reign, had an *Anti-Arminian* sense, will be out of Question to him that remembers what Addition there was then made to it. *The Grace of Christ, or the H. Ghost by him given, doth take away the Stony Heart, and giveth an Heart of Flesh; and although those that have no will to good things, he maketh them to will; and those that would evil things, he maketh them not to will, yet nevertheless he forceth not the will.* Articles Printed by *J. Day Anno* 1553. *Cum Privilegio*: If this then be the sense of the Article, let him go practise at home, and turn his Brains, how *to keep Man Humble, and yet neither make him Stock nor Stone*; and when he has found out the Mystery, send word to the Synod, who I am assured never asserted higher than this amounts to: But if this be not the sense of the Article *at present*, though it was *once so*, then it must follow that the Church has *more than a little alter'd her Doctrine since the Reformation*: And then a worse thing than all this will follow; for *p.* 8. He allows, *That if this Church did approach too near Popery, it would serve to justifie a Secession from it.* But says another, if it approaches too near *Arminianism*, it approaches too near *Popery*; and therefore *our Enquirer* will warrant any Mans Secession from the Church, without the least imputation of Schisme: What a close connexion there is between those two errours we shall hear e're long, and thither we refer the Reader, when we have told him, that the Church of *England* is certainly free from any Tincture of Arminianism,

and *so far* free from any spot of *Popery*; only it concern'd the *Enquirer* to understand the consequences of his own scandalous Reflections. I have done with his first Answer.

2. I come now to his second: *The Articles of the Doctrine of this Church do with such admirable prudence and wariness handle these Points, as if particular respect was had to these Men, and care taken that they might* Abundare sensu suo.

I cannot imagine what greater Reproach he could throw upon these famous Articles, and their worthy Compilers, then to suggest that they were calculated for *all Meridians* and *Latitudes*: As if the Church did imitate Λοξίας, the *Delphian Apollo*, whose Oracles wore *Two Faces under one Hood*, and were penn'd like those Amphilogies that cheated *Cræsus* and *Pyrrhus* into their distruction: Or as if like *Janus*, they looked πρόσω καὶ ὀπίσω. backwards and forwards; and like the untouch'd Needle, stood indifferently to be interpreted through the two and thirty Points of the Compass: The Papists do never more maliciously reproach the Scriptures, than when they call it *a Lesbian Rule*, *a Nose of Wax*, *a Leaden Dagger*, *a Pair of Seamans Trowzes*; *a Movable Dyal*, you may make it what a Clock you please: And yet they never arriv'd at that height of Blasphemy, as to say it was *Industriously so penn'd* by the *Amanuenses of the Holy Ghost*.

I dare not entertain so little Charity for an Assembly of Holy and Learned Men convened upon so solemn an occation, that they would play *Legerdemain*, and contrive us a Systeme of Divinity, which should be *Instrumentum pacis non veritatis*: The Conventicle of *Trent* indeed acted like themselves, (that is, a pack of Juglers) who when they were gravelled and knew not how to hush the noise, and importunate Clamour of the bickering Factions, the *Crafty Leading Men* found out *a Temper* (as they call'd it) to *skin over* that Wound which they could *not heal*, and durst *not search*; And what was the success of these Carnal Policies? only this! Both parties retained their differing opinions, believed just as they did before; and when they found how they had been cajouled, the Controversies which for a while had been smothered under the Ashes of *a Blind Subscription*, broke out into a more violent flame.

The craft of this Politick Junto, that impartial Historian *Pietro Polano* has opened to the World: *Hist. Counc. of Trent*, p. 216. *In the Year* 1546. (says he) *In the end of the Session* Dominicus *a* Soto, *principal of the* Dominicans, *wrote Three Books of Nature and Grace, wherein all his old Opinions were found*; Then comes *Andreas Vega*, a great Man amongst the *Franciscans*, *and he writes no less than Fifteen Books, upon the* 16 *Points of the Decree that passed that Session, and expounded all according to his own Opinions*: And yet their opinions were directly contrary to one another, though both supposed to agree with the Decree of the Council. So Righteous it is with God, that they who design not their Confessions for *an Instrument of Truth*, which is *Gods End*, should not find them *an Instrument of Peace*, which is *all their End*: They that will separate *Truth from Peace*, shall certainly

miss

miss both of *Peace and Truth*.

The Title prefix'd to the Book of Articles does abundantly secure us of their honesty. *The Catholick Doctrine believed and professed in the Church of* England. Now how shall we *at all believe*, if we know not *what to believe*? And if *the Trumpet gives an uncertain Sound*, 'tis all one as if it were *not Sounded*: That which is *every thing*, and *every where*, is *nothing*, and *no where*. That which has *no determinate Sense*, has *no Sense*, and that's very near akin to *Non-sense*. The *Jews* indeed have a Tradition, that the *Manna* was what every Mans appetite could relish; and such a Religion would these Men invent as should be *most flexible*, where it ought *not to bend*, and where it should *yield*, there to be *inflexible*. Strange it is, that Religion of all things in the World should be unfix'd, and like *Delos*, or *O-Brazile*, float up and down in various and uncertain Conjectures: What *Aristotle* us'd to say of one of his Books, That is was *Editum & non Editum*, and what was the just reproach of the *Rhemists Testament*, that it came forth (as some report of a great Princes Sword) with a *Padlock upon't*, so stuffed with Pen and Ink-horn Terms, that it was almost as intelligible in *Latin*; the same contumely does our *Enquirer* pour out upon the Articles of the Church, which were the most famous Testimony that then for many Years, nay Ages, had been given to the Truth of the Gospel. I conclude then, that he must be very immodest, that can entertain a thought so unworthy the Learning, Religion, and sincerity of our first Reformers, which were their greatest Ornaments, as they were of their Times, and the Articles the greatest glory of them both.

I know it's an easie matter to draw up a Proposition so dubiously, that the greatest Dissenters may subscribe it; but what is the advantage of such dawbing Policy? Peace or Unity of Judgment? Some Men indeed have got a Worm in their Pates, and they fancy this an expedient for these ends, but there's no such matter; for the Subscribers in this Case do not bow their judgments to the Articles, but gently bend the Articles to their judgment. It's not the Bank that moves to the Boat, but the Boat that moves to the Bank, and each Party thinks it self the stronger, because it can draw in the obsequious Articles to abet their opinioons.

When therefore he insinuates, that they of the Calvinistical perswasion, in subscribing the Articles, are forced to use *Scholastick Subtleties* to reconcile their opinions to them; we entreat them to use *Scholastick Subtleties*, who are of the other judgment, to reconcile the Articles to their opinions, and they will find all too little, unless they borrow a Point or two of Conscience, first to resolve to subscribe, and then defend it afterwards as well as they can.

And when he intimates that they were only *some few Divines* of this Church that used this expedient, we know well, that till the appearance of the late *A. B. Laud*, the generality of this Church were of the *Dort* perswasion; Arminianism has been

openly declared *Schism*; *Arminius* himself *an Enemy to the Grace of God*, by our greatest and most Learned Princes; and the greatest of our Church-Men have declared against it, as a stranger and enemy to our Church. But all this, as I observ'd, was brought in to vilifie *the Synod of* Dort; and that eminently Learned and Holy Person St. *Austin*, whose Credit whilst the *Enquirer* would wound, he shall but like *the Viper in the Fable*, *Break his own Teeth*, *and never hurt the impregnable Steel*.

2. A second pretended Objection against the Church is, *That it is not sufficiently purged from the Dross of* Romish *Superstitions*.

It's a marvelous advantage to him that challenges another to fight; if he may prescribe and impose the Weapon; this Authority has our *Enquirer*, and some of his Camerades arrogated as peculiar to themselves, that they may put what objections they please into the Mouths of Dissenters.

For though they cannot in the largest Charity acquit *a Party*, (neither considerable for Number or solid Learning) which yet by noise and Pragmaticalness, and some other Artifices, have vested themselves with *the Name of the Church*; yet they are ready to clear *the Articles of the Church* from Popery, and Arminianism.

I intend those alone, who would obtrude a meaning upon the Doctrine, as if it impugned *particular Election*, *Original Sin*, and asserted *Free-will*, *Justification by our own Works*, and the rest of those Points whereof some mention has been made.

In the first of *Car.* I. The House of Commons exhibited Articles against one Mr. *Richard Mountague*; the 5*th*. of which was thus. *And whereas in the* 17*th*. *of the said Articles, it is Resolved,* [That God hath certainly decreed by his Counsel secret to us, to deliver from Curse, and Damnation, those whom he hath chosen out of Mankind in *Christ*, and to bring them by *Christ* to Everlasting salvation, wherefore they which be endued with so excellent a Benefit, be called according to Gods purpose working in due time, they through Grace obey that calling, they be justified freely, walk Religiously in good works, and at last by Gods mercy attain to Everlasting Felicity;] *He the said* Richard Mountague, *in the said Book called* The Appeal, *doth affirm and maintain, that men justified may fall away from that state which once they had. Thereby laying a most malicious scandal upon the Church of* England, *as if he did differ herein from the Reformed Churches in* England, *and the Reformed Churches beyond the Seas, and did Consent unto those pernicious Errours commonly called* Arminianism, *which the late famous* Q. Eliz. *and* K. James *of happy memory, did so piously, and Religiously labour to suppress.* And farther they charge him, That *the scope and end of his Book, was to give encouragement to Popery, and to withdraw his Majesties Subjects from the True Religion established*; From whence we have gained this Point, that that Doctrine which denies Perseverance in them that were once justified, doth abet *Arminianism*, and therein draw near Popery: But if these men might expound the Articles, they would

deny

deny the one, and abet the other; and therefore do draw too near Popery: Hereupon Dissenters have a warrant under his own Hand to withdraw from the Church, for (says he) p. 8. *If the charge* (of drawing too near the Church of *Rome*) *were true, or if it were probable, it would justifie their separation from it.*

In 5 *Caroli* I. The House of Commons made this protestation, *Whosoever shall bring in Innovation of Religion, or by Favour or Countenance seek to extend Popery or Arminianism, or other Opinion disagreeing from the truth, or Orthodox Church, shall be Reputed a Capital Enemy to this Kingdom and Common-wealth.*

And so close has the connexion between Popery, and Arminianism ever been adjudged, that the Jusuites, who throughly understand their Interest, and the most proper and suitable means to promote it, have pitcht upon *This* as the best expedient to introduce *That*; for thus in that Triumphant Letter of theirs to their Rector at *Brussels*, they express themselves, *Now we have planted that Soveraign Drug of Arminianism, which will purge the Protestants of their Heresie, and it flourishes, and brings forth fruit in due season.* Whence we are taught both our Disease, and our Remedy: The Disease under which poor *England* laboured was *Protestancy*, the Remedy was the *Jesuites powder*, or a round Dose of *Arminianism*, which is it seems a specifick purger of that Humour.

That the Divines of this Church did formerly maintain a just suspicion, that the Opinions of *Conditional Election*, and *falling away totally from Grace*, were an In-let to *Popery*, we need no other evidence then that Letter written by the *University of Cambridge*, to their Chancellor, upon the occasion of Barrets, and *Baro's* preaching up such like novelties: It was dated *March* 8. 1595. *If* (say they) *passage be admitted to these Errours, the whole Body of Popery will break in upon us by little and little, to the overthrow of all Religion.* And therefore they humbly beseech *his Lordships good Aid and Assistance, for the suppressing* those Errours *in time*; *and not only of* those Errours, *but of* Gross Popery, *like by* such means *in time to Creep in amongst them, as they found by late experience it dangerously begun.*

I say, not that the Articles of the Church encline to Popery, nay they detest it, but this I say, that if they did encline to *Arminianism*, they must to *Popery*; If they do not, why are they *with allowance*, so misconstrued? if they do; then the secession of the Non-conformists is thereby justified.

Having therefore made this Objection for the Dissenters, he will give them their Answer, and prove the unreasonableness of this suggestion, That the Church of *England* approaches too near the Superstitions of *Rome*.

1. *Its certain* (says he) *there hath been little or no Alteration made, either in the Doctrine, Discipline, or Liturgy, since the first Reformation.* Little or none? Does he mean for *the better*, or *the worse*? To say, there has *little or none* been made for *the better*, is a Commendation so cold, that silence had been more

an Honour than *such praise*. The Reformation was begun as the times would bear; A fair Copy was set for posterity to imitate, never dreaming that their Rudiments should have been our *utmost perfection*. That their first step should have been our *Hercules Pillars*, and a *Ne plus ultra*, to all future endeavours. To say, there has been *little or no Alteration made for the worse*, is a more modest way of Defamation; but Dissenters have many things to say to this.

§ 1 That there have been *considerable Alterations* made in the Articles themselves, if not as they remain *in Scriptis*, yet as they are *publickly interpreted*, for we subscribe not to a heap of *Letters and Syllables*, but to *the sense and meaning* of certain propositions, as they are owned by the Church. What the Church owns (say they) we can no otherwise understand, then by those Writings which appear every day *Licensed, and approved* by those of greatest Authority in the Church: Now if we may judge of the meaning of the Articles by those Writings, They are as much Altered, as if *Negatives* had been changed into *Affirmatives*, or *Affirmatives* into *Negatives*. In former times they were generally subscribed, because the most scrupulous were generally informed by those of most eminent place in the Church, that the meaning was sound, but now (say they) we are informed otherwise, we see our mistake, the words have *a different and contrary meaning*; and therefore we must be excused in subscription. 2. They will say, That what the *Enquirer* calls *little or nothing*, is a very *great something*: for it concerns us not so much what is put into *the Liturgy or Rituals*, as what is made *a Condition of Communion* which the Church: Now in the beginning of the Reformation, though many things were *in use*, yet few imposed as the *necessary Terms* of enjoying a station in that Society; Things supposed indifferent were used as indifferent. In the 13*th*. of *Q. Eliz.* subscription is only required to *Doctrinals*, and such Subscribers, though not ordained by Prelates, were admitted to officiate as Ministers of the Church of *England*. But now subscription is peremptorily required to all and every thing contain'd in the Book of Commonprayer, The Book of ordering Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, wherein are considerable Doctrinal Additions, and Alterations; such as *the different Orders of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons*, supposed to be distinct *jure divino*; A Doctrine which A. B. *Cranmer* understood not, as is evident from his *M. S.* exemplified in Dr. *St.* his *Irenicum*.

In the beginning of the Reformation, Ceremonies were retained to win upon the people who were then generally Papists, and doted upon old usages, and not as the necessary conditions of Communion; They were retained, not to shut out of Dores the Protestants, which is their present use, but to invite in the Romanists, which was their Original end, but there's nothing more common, then for Institutions to degenerate; and be perverted from the first Reasons of their usage, and yet still to plead *the Credit of their Originals*: Thus *Indulgences, and Remission of sins*

were

were first granted to all that would engage in the *Holy War*, to recover the Sepulchre of Christ out of the hands of the *Saracens*, but in process of time they were dispensed to them who would massacre the *Waldenses*, and *Albigenses*, and such as could not obey the Tyranny of the *Romish* faction: Thus was *the Inquisition* first set up to discover the *Hypocritical Mours in* Spain, but the edge of it since turned against the Protestants. And thus were the Ceremonies perverted, at first made *a Key to let in* the Papists, and now made *a Lock to shut out* Protestants. What a glorious work must it then be to abolish those Engines, that seeing they are become *weak to do Good*, they may be rendred as *impotent to do mischief*: Imitating herein *the Apostle*; who once circumcised *Timothy* to gain *the weak Jews*, yet stoutly refused to Circumcise *Titus*, least he should stumble *the weak Gentiles*. 3. The Ceremonies its true crept into the Church pretty early, yet they laid no weight, no stress upon them; It was decreed by the Council of *Sardica*, that *none should be made a Bishop, but he that had passed the Inferiour Orders, and continued in them for some time*; and yet we see they insisted not upon such a Canon, when it might prejudice the Church, and exclude useful persons from the Ministry: and therefore *Nectarius was chosen Patriarch of* Constantinople, *not only being a Lay-man, but unbaptized*: As our *Enquirer* commends and admires the Churches Wisdom in forming her Doctrinal Articles, that men of various perswasions might subscribe them; so her tenderness and wisdom had been no less admirable, had she recommended Ceremonies with such an Indifferency, that they who were passionately fond of them, might be humoured, and they that protest they scruple them in Conscience towards God, might fairly let them alone: for it can be no dishonour to a Church to be as Lax in *Ceremonies of humane constitution*, as in *Doctrines of Divine Revelation*. 4. Dissenters say from good grounds, that that which makes all an insupportable burden, *viz.* That we must subscribe according to the clause of the 20*th*. Article, that *The Church has power to decree Rites, and Ceremonies*, is added *since the Beginning of the Reformation*. And this they think heavier than all the Ceremonies put together; many could practice a thing supposing it indifferent in it self, and having a real tendency to a greater good, who can by no means subscribe that the Church has such a power to take away my liberty: I have taken notice, that in the Ancient Bibles of this Church, *the Contents* of Psalm 149. ran thus; *The Prophet exhorteth to praise God for his Love to his Church, and for his benefits*. But in the latter days we had got high ranting Language, *The Prophet exhorteth to praise God for his Love to his Church, and for that power that he hath given to his Church over the Consciences of Men*: This is no little Addition. 5. They will tell him, that the number of Non-conformists was considerable from the very Infancy of the Reformation, though it could not be expected that their names should be inserted in *the Church Calender amongst the Confessors*;

and that Non-conformity has run a line parallel with the National Reformation to this day.

But (says our *Enquirer*) *The main quarrel is, that we are not Always Reforming.* No that's not the main, nor any Quarrel that Dissenters have with them: Let but Reformation be made *in what is necessary*, and *as often as is necessary*, and I know none disposed to Quarrel: It were better never to be sick, than to have a Remedy; yet upon supposition of a Disease, in my mind there's nothing like *an approved Medicine.* It's more desirable not to make Shipwrack, than to escape by a Plank; yet when a wrack is made, he deserves to sink that despises a subsidiary Plank: If it were possible for Churches not to contract corruption, I know no need, because no use of Reformation.

Some Men hate Reformation as the Bear hates the Stake. They pretend, that *the Reformation of the Church will discompose the State:* But the best way to preserve *the Iron*, is to scowr away *the Rust*: A dirty Face may be Wash'd, and yet the skin never rub'd off; and the *House swept*, and never thrown out of the Windows: They plead again, That *no Reformation can be made, but what will notably diminish the Revenues, Grandeur, and Credit of the Church.* And this Objection has more real weight in it than all the rest. This is the Capital grievance, *Hinc illæ Lachrymæ!* But does it not argue *a Saleable and Mercenary Soul*, that would Barter away Purity for Pluralities? The most severe Reformation would leave too much, if any thing, for such an Objector; what ever have been the specious Pretences, this has been the real obstruction of an effectual Reformation; Kings and Parliaments have always been inclinable towards a Redress of Exorbitances; but the Covetousness and Pride of Churchmen have ever impeded their Pious endeavours. A Parliament in Queen *Eliz.* Reign, as we read in Dr. *Fullers* Ch. History was bringing in a Bill against Pluralities; and A. B. *Whitgift* sends a Letter to her Majesty, signifying they were all undone Horse and Foot if it passed: Observe how he deplores the miserable State of the Church. *The woful and distressed estate, whereinto we are like to fall, forceth us, with grief of heart, in most Humble manner to crave your Majesties most Soveraign Protection.* —— Why what is the matter? were they making a Law against Preaching? No! or against Common-Prayer? By no means! what ailes then the distressed Man? —— why, *We therefore not as Directors, but as Humble Remembrancers, beseech your Highnesses favourable beholding of our present State, and what it will be in time, if the Bill against Pluralities should take place.* No question it must be utter extirpation of the Christian Religion: Thus in another Letter to the same Queen he complains with Lamentations that would soften a heart of Marble. That they have brought in *a Bill giving liberty to marry at all times of the year, without restraint*: well, but if men be obnoxious *to the evil* all times of the year, why should they not use *the Remedy* that God has appointed all times of the year? The Apostle who tells us, *Its better to marry*

than

then burn, did not except any time of the year. But why may not a Parliament make *a Law*, as well as the Eccleſiaſtical Court give *a Licenſe*, that it ſhall be Lawful to marry at any time of the year? Ay but the Parliament will make the Law for nothing, whereas thoſe other will have Money for their Licenſes. But he proceeds, — *Its Contrary to the old Canons, continually obſerved by us.* Why but is it not Contrary to the old Canons to take Money for a Licenſe? Yes! but — *It tendeth to the ſlander of the Church, as having hitherto maintained an Error.* And now you have the bottom of the Bag: All Reformation muſt touch the Clergy either in their *Credits or Profits*; and it were better never to put *a hand to that work*, then to touch *either of theſe* with a little finger.

2. His ſecond Anſwer is, *All is not to be eſteemed Popery that is held by the Church of* Rome, *we are not to depart further from her, then ſhe has departed from the Truth, and thoſe things wherein they Agree, are ſuch (and no other) as were generally received by All Chriſtian Churches, and by the* Roman *before it lay under any ill character.* Many things might be returned, but I ſhall ſay little, only 1. As all is not to be accounted *Popery* which is held by the Church of *Rome*, ſo neither is all to be accounted *Schiſm* which hot men in their paſſions and prejudices will call ſo. Let that be now accounted Popery, which in the beginning of the Reformation, by the moſt eminent Divines of this Nation, was ſo accounted, and he will hear no more I preſume of that Argument. 2. I would be ſatisfied whether *Rome* departed from the Truth, Simplicity, and Complexion of the Evangelical Worſhip, when ſhe loaded the Church with ſuch multitudes of unneceſſary Ceremonies, and Superſtitions; If not, why did the Church of *England* depart from her *in Any*? if ſo; why did ſhe not depart *in All*? 3. Why ſhould we be ſo tender of departing from an Abominable Strumpet? were it not more Chriſtian to ſay, we will depart from the Reformed Churches abroad, no further then they have departed from the Truth, and then the Argument will be ingenuouſly ſtrong, rather to part with Ceremonies that we may Syncretize with Proteſtants, then retain them that we may hold fair Quarter with Papiſts. 4. It cannot be made appear, that thoſe things wherein the Agreement yet abides, were generally received by all Chriſtian Churches: Kneeling at the Sacrament was not received in the Church, till *Rome* came under an ill, and moſt odious *Character*, Many Centuries after the Apoſtles knew it not, and when it was firſt entertain'd, it was accommodated to the grand Idol of Tranſubſtantiation.

But our *Enquirer* has a mind to be Reſolved in a few Queſtions for his own private ſatisfaction.

1. Qu. *If there be ſuch a dangerous affinity between the Church of* England, *and the* Romiſh, *how came it to paſs that the bleſſed Inſtruments of our Reformation, A. B.* Cranmer, *and others, laid down their lives in Teſtimony to this againſt that.* I meddle not with his *dangerous Affinities, nor Conſanguinities*, nor whe-

ther they come within the Prohibited Degrees or no; what I am concern'd in, is his argument, which may receive this ſhort Anſwer. They laid down their lives in teſtimony againſt thoſe Errours wherein they *differ'd*, and not againſt thoſe wherein they might be *agreed*: They might poſſibly agree *in many*, and yet differ in ſo many as might coſt them their Lives: There was *difference* enough to juſtifie their *oppoſition*; and yet there might be *Agreement enough* to juſtifie a modeſt complaint.

I once heard a perſon upon his Arraignment for Burglary plead ſtrongly, that he had ſerved his Majeſty faithfully in his Wars; the judge I remember took him up ſomewhat too ſhort: Friend! you are not Indicted for your *Loyalty*, but for *breaking a Houſe*: The Non-conformiſt agree with the Church of *England* in more, and more material points, then *England* can be ſuppoſed to Agree with *Rome*, and yet all his ſmooth and oylie Oratory, will not perſwade the Diſſenters that they ſuffer not from their Brethren.

The difference between the Church of *England*, and *Rome*, is very conſiderable, it is *Eſſential*, it conſtitutes them two diſtinct Societies, and ſuch as cannot Coaleſce without fundamental alterations in *the one*, and yet there might poſſibly remain ſome things, which might ſpeak too near an Approach.

I ſhould be loath to be miſunderſtood; and do queſtion more my own infelicity to cloath my Conceptions with appoſite expreſſions, then the Acuteneſs of the Reader, and therefore I ſhall give him this general Advertiſement to prevent miſtakes. I am not concerned to Aſſert, that this Church Approaches too near that of *Rome*, but modeſtly examining whether the *Enquirer* has proved his Negative, that ſhe does not; and *therefore* does not, becauſe *Cranmer*, *Ridley*, &c. laid down their lives in Teſtimony againſt *Romiſh* Corruptions. I deny not *the Conſequent*, but *the Conſequence*; Not that this Church maintains a due diſtance from *Rome*; but that it appears true upon *this Reaſon*, becauſe the bloody Papiſts put many of her Ancient Fathers, and Zealous Children to death, of whoſe weakneſs I am the more confident, being aſſured by good Hiſtory, That they have moſt barbarouſly perſecuted and murdered thoſe who differ'd from them *in ſome ſingle Point*, whilſt they held communion with them *in all the reſt*.

The Church of *England* (I ſay it again) is departed from *Rome*, but yet it may be true, §1. That ſome amongſt us have laid ſuch foundations, as being regularly, and proportionably advanc'd in their ſuperſtructures, will either re-introduce that Abomination, or condemn *Cranmers* ſeparation. In *the grand Debate*, p. 92. 93. The Reverend and Learned Divines lay down theſe Rules. 1. *That God has given not only a Power, but a Command alſo of Impoſing whatſoever ſhall be truly Decent, and becoming his Worſhip.* 2. *That not Inferiours, but Superiours muſt judge what is truly Convenient, and Decent*: Now allow but the Pope, and his Conſiſtory theſe favourable Conceſſions, (and it cannot

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reasonably be deny'd them by those who claim them) and all their Injunctions will be justified; and *Cranmer* with his Brethren found *Will-sufferers*, who charg'd their persecutors to be *Will-worshippers*: The Pope commands us to worship an Image, nor terminating our Adoration therein, but letting it slide nimbly through that *Medium* to the Adorable Object which it represents; and all this as *August*, and *Decent*, and *a great exciter of Devotion*, *a mighty mover of Pious Affections*: I suppose my self to be one of those *Inferiours*, who scruple the lawfulness of this practise: He who is my *supposed Superiour*, asks me, whether I do not own it my Duty to *Worship God*? I plainly own the Affirmative, but I am not satisfied in *the Mode of Adoration*. He answers readily, *The Modes of Worship* are but *indifferent Circumstances*, in their use *very Decent*, and commanded too by those who have power to *Impose and Judge* what is truly Decent: I Rejoyn again, This is very strange Doctrine, I have drunk in other apprehensions from my Mothers Milk: But he stops my Mouth, and turns me to the very Page, where some of our most eminent Divines of late years do plead on their behalf, what he pleads on his.

But further, he Commands Holy Oyl, Holy Water, Consecrated Salt, Cream, Spittle, Insufflations, Exercisms, with abundance of fine Devices to be used in or with, or in order to Baptism; The inferiour scruples these as meer fooleries, too childish and light to be used in Gods Worship. But the Superiour takes you up: You are not Competent Judges; it belongs to him to Impose, and Judge what is Decent, and such he has judged these, and as such imposed them, and your work is not Disputation, but Obedience.

When B. *Bonner* heard, that in our Reformation we had reserved some of the old Ceremonies, he answered with a smile, *They have begun to Taste of our Broth, and in time they'l eat of our Beef*: The old Crafty Fox knew well, that where there was a *Nest-Egge* left, the Priests and Friers would *Lay to it* the whole Racemation of their Superstitions.

They that take away a practise, and do not renounce the Principle upon which 'tis built, do but lop off some of the more Luxuriant Branches, whilst the Tree is alive, or turn his Holiness out of doors, and yet give him the Key in's Pocket to return at his leasure, or pleasure: And he might be too hasty that said, *The* English *forced the Pope out of doors so hastily, that he had not time to take his Garments with him.*

I confess, I have been puzled what Answer to give to a Cavilling Popish Priest; when he asks so pertly, why the Priest may not put his Fingers in the Childs Ears, in Token that it shall hearken diligently to the Word of God; why not put Salt upon the Childs Tongue, (methinks I see how the poor wretch screws and twists up its Mouth) in Token that its Speech shall be seasoned with Salt, as well as make an Airy Cross over its Fore-head, in Token that it shall confess a Crucified Christ:

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If we will give scope to our wanton extravagant fancies, and set our pregnant inventions on work, we might easily excogitate a thousand such pretty ingenious knacks, as might bear some Imaginary Allusion to some Spiritual Grace or Duty; but amongst them all I wonder no lucky Fancy never stumbled upon't, to put a *Decent Banner*, with St. *George's* Cross upon't into the Childs Hand, in Token that it should *manfully* (and not like a Child) *fight under Christs Banner*.

2. Quest. *How comes it to pass, that all those of the Roman Communion withdraw themselves from ours, and all true Protestants think it their Duty to absent themselves from their Worship.*

Physitians do carefully observe the Indications of Nature; and therefore observing that our *Enquirers* mind stands strongly inclined to a little pleasantness. why should we check the Humour? How comes it to pass? Truly I neither know that it *does come to pass*, nor *why it comes to pass*. I am certain I have read or heard, that for the first 12. years of Queen *Eliz.* the Papists came to Church; and if they have knock'd off since, and why they have knock'd off, I wait for an Answer from this *Enquirer*. King *Edw.* VI in his Proclamation to the *Devonshire* Rebels, tells them; *That if the Mass were good in Latin, it could not be bad by being Translated into English.* It could not be objected, as 't was against the Commedian, *Ex Græcis Bonis. fecit Latinas non Bonas*; This could not be the Reason to be sure. No, no, (says he) *They are commanded so to do by the Head of their Church*: There's the Reason; then what needed all this stir; *The command of a Superiour will hallow, or at least excuse an erroneous Action.* As a *Transcendent* in our Church speaks; and if this Doctrine would but pass, we should have a sweet time on't: Our *Superiours must impose, and judge what's Indifferent and Decent*; and we have the easiest life in the world, nothing but to *wink hard*, and *lift up our Legs high enough*, and there's no danger.

And yet the Papists learn'd not possibly all this Lesson of withdrawing from the Church of *England*, from their own Superiours, they might be taught the Doctrine neater home: A. B. *Land* being ask'd by a Lady, *Whether she might be Saved in the Romish Communion?* Answered readily, *Madam! You may*; and the good Lady took his word, and ventured it. It's possible it might be the same Lady, that Dr. *Fuller*, *Ch. Hist.* B. 11. p. 217. tells us of. She being ask'd by the same Prelate, *Why she had changed her Religion?* Answered, *Because I ever hated a Crowd.* And being desired *to explain her meaning herein*; she replyed. *I perceived your Lordship*, (it should have been *Grace* by her Ladyships favour) *and many others are hasning thither as fast as you can, and therefore to prevent a press I went before you.*

What design of Reconciliation with *Rome*, and upon what terms *Grotius* carried on, is pretty well known by this time of day: That he had a Party here in *England*, or expectations of one, his own words testifie. *Æquis multis non displicuisse* Grotii *propace Labores*, *Nirunt Lutetiæ*, *& in omni Gallia multi*, *multi*

multi in Poloniâ, & Germaniâ, *in* Angliâ *non pauci, placidi, pacis Amantes*, Discus. p. 16. There were I see by this, a Company of Loving, Sweet-natur'd, Tractable Souls here in *England*, that would have step'd half way over the Ditch to meet his Holiness: Especially since Mr. *Mountagues* time, who informs us, That *the Controverted Points* (between *England* and *Rome*) *are of a lower and inferiour Nature, which a Man may be ignorant of, without peril of his Soul, and may resolve to oppose this or that without peril of perishing for ever.* That *Images may be used for instruction of the Ignorant, and excitation of Devotion*: And that *the Church of* Rome *has ever continued from upon the same foundations of Sacraments, and Doctrine instituted by God.*

They are not single Instances of those who have not abhorred the Communion of *Rome*, which I could give, but I will spare *the Living* and cover *the Dead.*

Nor will I say, that these or such as these were *Papists*, yet methinks they did incline, and warp desperately towards it; there's an *odd Distinction* we often meet with, of a *Sensus Compositus*, and a *Sensus Divisus*, which may a little illuminate us: Now because my Readers are not like to be any of the more *deadly learned sort*, I will a little explain the Distinction to their Capacities, by a very familiar, though I confess a very homely Comparison: It's impossible (say I) that a Maggot should ever be a Fly: That is, in your *Sensus Compositus*; or so long as it continues to be a Maggot, because these have *Two distinct forms*, and the one keeps the other out of possession, whilst it hath a Nail or Tooth to scratch or bite: But now its not only *possible*, but *easie* for this Fly to become a Maggot, in *Sensu Diviso*; that is, for the Maggot to strip her self of her old shape, and appear in *another likeness*; I shall be modest in the Application, and hope the Reader will not be immodest: Such persons as I have mention'd could never be Papists, whilst they adhered to the Doctrine of the Church of *England*; but yet such were their dispositednesses that way, that the transition was easie, to slide from such loose Principles into Popery, and yet the Church the mean time might be Innocent.

3. Quest. *Whence comes it to past, that the Romish Church have more spight against our Church, than against any Sect or Party whatsoever?* When it is once well proved that they have so, it will be time enough to enquire why they have so; but we must suppose one half of his discourse to be true, that we may have leave to answer the other.

The spight of the *Roman* Faction against *Protestancy as such*, has so eminently discovered it self, under whatever denominations they have been differenced; that none of them have cause to boast of it, or be ambitious to tast further of it: It were well improved, if they who are Objects of their implacable spight, could learn to love more, and agree better amongst themselves: The Papists think themselves excusable in *persecuting all*, when *one Protestant* so furiously *persecutes another*, they know no Rea-

son

ſon why they ſhould *love us* better than we *love our ſelves* : And truly againſt whom their ſpight is hotteſt is hard to judge. If we compare the Cruelties of the *Pariſian Maſſacre* with the Butcheries of the *Iriſh Rebellion*; we ſhall find the true Reaſon why they ſlew more in *Ireland* than *Paris*, was, becauſe there was more to be ſlain: The Fire may go out for want of matter, but I dare ſay, never for want of a good Stomack to its Food: In ſhort, their ſpight is there the greateſt where they can ſhew it moſt; as to one that's very hungry the biggeſt Diſh is ever the beſt: The Papiſts judge of the Object of their hatred, as one did of *Tullies* Orations; The longeſt is to be ſure the moſt Excellent: And yet I conceive the *Enquirer* to be quite out in this matter. The Papiſts may ſpight the Church of *England* upon the account of its fair and vaſt Revenues, great Dignities, marvellous Honours, Wealth, Splendour, and whatever is deſirable to the Eye, becauſe hereby the Church is able to vye with her; and yet their malice upon *the pure account of Religion* may be greater againſt other leſſer, weaker parties, whoſe Principles ſtand *more directly in oppoſition* to thoſe of *Rome*: I do not doubt but our *Enquirer* could bring better Arguments than theſe, to prove the diſtance of Religion between the Two Societies, for this I am ſure is too weak, unleſs it may appear, that their ſpight is levelled againſt the Church, *meerly on account of thoſe Principles wherein ſhe differs from Diſſenters.*

4. Queſt. *How comes it to paſs, that they of all Men moſt Zealouſly ſtand in the Gap to oppoſe the return of Popery?* That *Gap* at which Popery muſt *enter*, if ever it enters into *England*, is *the Diviſion between Proteſtants*, and if *that Gap* were well ſtop'd, Popery might *look over*, but would never *leap over*, or *break through the Hedge*: This *Gap of Diviſions*, is made by the impoſition of ſuch things, which in the Judgment of the Impoſers are *indifferent* in their *own Nature*; but in the Judgment of the Diſſenters *ſinful in their uſe and exerciſe.* The Diſſenters ſay, they cannot *ſtop the Breach*, unleſs they make *a wider* in their *own Conſciences*: If now they who ſeem ſo Zealouſly *to ſtand in the Gap to* keep out Popery, would come *out of the Gap*, and make it up, which elſe will *let in Popery*; we ſhall thank them more for making *up one*, than ſtanding in, and keeping open a thouſand.

I know very well, that many Men do oppoſe the Introduction of Popery, and there's cauſe for't: There's a Popery that would take away *their Wives*, and ſome *fear* it, and others *hope it* upon that account: There is a Popery that would ſubject them to a *forrein Metropolitan*, and make them trot to *Rome* upon every ſleevleſs errand; that would let ſtrangers like Locuſts and Caterpillers into the Land to eat up every green Herb; that would drain the *Thames* into *Tyber*, and derive all the Blood and Spirits of the Nation into another Channel. *Cæſar* had rather be *Primus in Villâ, quam Secundus in* Româ. Every one may ſooner hope to learn *A B C*, than to arrive ſo far as *P*: A diſtance

then

then there is, and yet the opposition against Popery may not prove the distance so great, but there may be too great an Agreement: The State of *Venice* did once expel *the Jesuits*, and yet they expelled *not Popery*; the *French* were long before they entertained *the Decrees of Trent*, yet still they were *Popish*: I quote them for no more than this; that its evident there may be *fierce opposition* upon some particular accounts, when yet there may be *a great Harmony* upon other accounts: Many oppose a Popery coming *Top and Top Gallant*, that yet would compound for a Popery upon handsome Terms.

This last Question has strangely transported him into a most passionate Panegyrick in commendation of *some Church-men*, for some rare exploit or other, which by all the circumstances, must be the procuring *The late Proclamation against Dissenters*: An Act so glorious, that no Age shall ever wear out its memory; This is it, which challenges from posterity, Statues of *Corinthian* Brass, and will embalm their memories to all succeeding Generations: He had lately exposed the Ignorance of those simple Men of *Dort*, that *they knew not how to make God just, unless they made him cruel too*; And what was their reproach, must now be these Mens Glory, That they know not how to make the Magistrate *Great*, unless they make him *Cruel*, nor Glorious, unless they destroy a considerable part of Mankind: Methinks Church-men should not be so ambitious to survive their own Funerals by such Epitaphs, *Here lye they who first taught Religion to be unmerciful.*

This high Encomium is attended in the rear with a severe charge against the Dissenters, That *they were instrumental in procuring a toleration and suspension of the Laws for Popery*: It is true, Conscientious Dissenters desire not the execution of *sanguinary Laws* upon Papists, merely for their Religion, there are proper ways enow to obviate the cursed tendencies of *their principles*, without dishonouring *our own*. Nor ought the modest desire of a sober liberty for the exercise of their own Consciences, to be interpreted an endeavour for *a Toleration of Popery*; They ever hoped that Governours know the difference between *Dissenting Protestants*; who agree with the Church of *England* in the Essentials of Christianity, and *Recusants* who substantially differ; and the wisdom of his gracious Majesty in his Declaration for Indulgence, made a clear distinction between them, though some wise Church-men could not see it.

Protestants however differing in some things from the present establishment, yet have no forreign Interest, no transmarine dependences; They own no Exotick Head, that may Alienate their affections from their natural Prince and leige Lord, their private peace and happiness is wrapt up in the general Happiness of the King and Kingdom; Any eye but that of Envy might have discovered a sensible difference between these parties.

That Protestant Dissenters were instrumental to procure such a Tole-

a Toleration for Popery, is therefore a ſlander ſo unworthy, that none would have forged, but they who never baulk an Officious untruth, when it may ſubſerve their main deſign, to render the Non-conformiſts Odious; that ſo the inſtruments of their deſtruction may not be fetter'd with the reluctancy of their reſtif Conſciences.

But we envy not them the Glory ſince they aſpire after it, of reducing their Brethren to primitive poverty, becauſe they endeavour primitive purity, let them enjoy the Glory, that no humble under-woods can grow under the ſhadow of their ſpreading Branches; let them take the glory of the Gardiners ſhears, which ſnips off every aſpiring Twig that would mount towards Goſpel ſimplicity above its fellows; ſuch is the glory of an old Aking Tooth, that is in inſupportable pain till it may either chew the fleſh of the Conſciencious, or come under the Diſcipline of *De la Roche's* inſtrument. For when His Majeſties Grace had for a while tyed them to the *Rack-ſtaves*, they were ready to *break the Bridle* till they could come at *the Manger*. Let it be a Quære then, whether it be more probable to Cure, or encreaſe the old ſuſpicions of ſome mens inclinations to Popery, That they could never be at eaſe, whilſt their Proteſtant Brethren had any in their native Countrey.

I ſhall not need to add to all this (ſays he) *That there are as underſtanding men in Religion, perſons of as holy Lives, and of as comfortable Conſciences of this Churches Education, as are any where to be found in the world beſides.*

They who are Maſters, or however owners of ſuch *comfortable Conſciences*, do ſurely know what it coſts *to get*, what care it requires *to keep*, and what torment it is *to loſe* a *comfortable Conſcience*. He that ſhall ſwear a thouſand times by the Great *Oſyris*, that he has *a comfortable Conſcience*, and yet ſhall thruſt other men upon *the turn-pikes of ſin*, and force them to act *againſt their light*, that ſhall rail at, or perſecute them for worſhipping God according to their convictions of Duty from the Word of God, muſt give me leave to be *Incredulous*, and earneſtly deſire him to find out ſome *Seliſidian*. That can believe the Moon to be made of a green Cheeſe. Let him farther conſider.

§ 1. That its *not the main conſiderable* in Conſcience, that it be *Comfortable*, but that it be ſo upon ſolid grounds. The Apoſtle *Peter*, 1 *Ep.* 3. 15. commands us *to be ready to render a reaſon of the hope that is in us*. If the reaſon of our hope, comfort, and confidence, be not as *ſtrong*, as the building is high, the Towring Edifice will tumble down upon our own heads: It behoves us to be as ſolicitous about *the ſpring* of our Comforts, as the *ſweetneſs of the ſtreams*: And I am the more earneſt with this *Enquirer* to look after the comfortableneſs of his own Conſcience, for as for the Religious and Orthodox Divines of this Church, I doubt not both of the purity and peace of their Conſciences) becauſe 1. He allows *no other Election*, then Gods *determining abſolutely of temporal Bleſſings*, p. 74. But the Church of *Eng-*

England Art. 17 having described a particular Election to Everlasting Life, from Gods Everlasting purpose; tells us. *That the godly consideration of Predestination, and our Election in Christ, is full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort to Godly persons, and such as feel in themselves the working of the Spirit of Christ.* He then that disowns this Doctrine, must needs want one main ground of *a pure and comfortable Conscience.* 2. They who own Justification by works, want another bottom of a *comfortable Conscience.* So the Church of *England*, Art. 11. *Wherefore that we are Justified by Faith only, is a most wholsome Doctrine, and full of comfort*: All peace then is founded in Grace: In Gods Grace as the Fountain whence it springs, and in the Operations of Grace upon the Soul, as the Evidences of that Grace in God; and though men may bless themselves in Evil, and flatter themselves when they find prosperous Iniquity, yet if any one be a lyar, a persecuter, a hater of Godliness, and Godly Men, a slanderer, &c. God speaks no peace to him; and therefore its more adviseable to boast less of a *comfortable Conscience*, and mind the things that belong to a *comfortable Importance.*

3. The last pretended cause of the Dissentees withdrawing from the Church of *England*, is, *A Charge against the sufficiency, but especially the sanctity of the Clergy.*

The Dissenters do gladly acknowledge, that the Learning and Piety of very many of the Ministers of the Church of *England*, is such as deserves an honourable place in their hearts; that they have not such a valuation for some of our *Enquirers* co-partners, they beg his excuse, till they may see more cogent Reasons to alter their Judgements; when they are in the Humour to take a few sorry Sophismes candied over with Rhetorick, to be Learning, or uncharitable censoriousness, crusted over with smooth Hypocrisie, to be Piety, they see nothing to the contrary but they may enlarge their Charities. That there are many of the present Establishment, eminent for sound Learning, and exemplary Holiness, who exercise Christian tenderness towards those, who dissenting in Conscience, do suffer for Conscience, is the rejoycing of their Souls under their great pressures; And they know that the more *Learned and Godly* any person is, *the more humble* he must needs be; A little knowledge ferments an impotent heart, and makes it intolerably arrogant; but he that knows much, amongst other things must needs know, that he that stands in need of *mercy from God*, and therefore will more readily shew *pitty to Man*: He that knows what *a tender Conscience* is *at home*, will pitty and indulge it, wherever he meets with it *abroad.* He that knows much, cannot presume all the world enjoys his measures of Light.

The *Enquirer* might therefore well have spared this odious and invidious discourse, had he not found it necessary, first to make a Man of Clouts, and then execute it: And yet his Victory cannot be great, in trampling on those that lye on the ground, and can be laid no lower, but in their Graves, for to Hell he cannot send

send them. Two needless things he will say to this Objection, for he is full, *Et si non aliquâ nocuisset mortis in essit.*

1. *Supposing this Objection had been true, yet it could not be made by any Protestant, without contradicting his principles.* No, why not? Oh, for *the Papists are taught, that the efficacy of all Divine offices, depends upon the intention, and condition of him that administers*; but Protestants are taught it seems otherwise, that *the efficacy of all Divine Ordinances, depends upon the Divine Institution, and the concurrence of Gods Grace with my use of them.*

The Reader must give me leave to repeat my former caution, which is always understood, though not expresst, that I deny not the sanctity of the English Clergy, my only task is, to examine the strength of his Arguments, which are sometimes so weak, as would tempt the less considerate to conclude, that cannot be true, which so bold an undertaker cannot make out. His answer to the Objection, is certainly more weak then the Objection it self: For,

§. 1. When he finders the Church of *Rome*, sure the Protestant Dissenters must expect no Quarter: The Papists do indeed hold, That *the efficacy of Sacraments depends upon* the Intention *of the Priest*; but that it depends on *the Condition of the Priest as to Holiness*, they assert not. I shall produce one evidence of many. *Tolet* de instructione sacerdotis, *lib.* 1. *cap.* 92. propounds this Question. *Quando licet à ministris malis accipere Sacramenta? When, or in what case is it lawful to receive the Sacraments from wicked Ministers?* And the very moving of the Question implies, that at least *at sometimes, and in some cases*, its lawful; but this will more fully appear from his Answers, which he gives. 1. Negatively, , A non-toleratis ab Ecclesiâ non , licet ullum Sacramentum accipere etiam necessitatis tempore, *Its not lawful to receive any Sacrament from those who are not tolerated by the Church, no not in case of necessity.* Here is Doctrine to his own hearts content, and wherein the Jesuite may assure himself of our *Enquirers* suffrage. A Non-conformist amongst them may not Baptize, or Administer the Supper, though the Salvation or Damnation of never so many depended on it. And yet when the Casuist thinks better on't, he will *except Baptism*, and perhaps the other Sacraments *in the Article and point of death*. 2. Affirmatively. , A malis ministris, dum non sequa- , tur aliquod grave scandatum possumus sacra recipere, Nam Ec- , clesia ipsos tolerat. & ipsi talia administrantes sibi solis nocent. *We may receive Sacraments from wicked Ministers* (such as he there describes) *provided no grievous scandal follow upon it; for the Church tolerates such as these, and when they administer the Ordinances, they hurt none but themselves.* Nay he quotes *Pope Nick.* to back him. *Isti sunt sicut fax accensa quæ alios illuminat, & se consumit: & unde aliis commodum exhibent, sibi dispendium præbent mortis: These evil Ministers are like a burning Torch, which enlightens others, though it wast it self; and destroy themselves by that very means whereby they advantage others:* but at last he comes

to

to this. , Ab his quibus ex officio incumbit, ſive ſint parati, ſive , non, licet petere, & accipere Sacramenta, ſive ex neceſſitate ſive non, quia ille *ex officio* tenetur quandocunque petiero miniſtrare, nec ego jus meum à nitto ex illius malitiâ. *We may demand, and receive Sacraments from thoſe, whoſe duty it is to Adminiſter, whether they be prepared or not; whether it be in a caſe of neceſſity or not; Becauſe ſuch a one is bound by virtue of his Office to miniſter when I demand it, and I cannot looſe my right through his malice.* Navar indeed tells us, That *Mortale eſt peccatum Andire Miſſam, aut Recipere Sacramenta, à notorio Concubinario. That its a mortal ſin to hear Maſs from a notorious Whore-maſterly Prieſt;* but honeſt *Suarez* corrects that preciſeneſs, and clears it up, that *That Prohibition is repeated by the Council of* Conſtance. So that in this one point, the Papiſts are as *Orthodox* as our *Enquirer* can reaſonably deſire, and have laid no Stone of offence at which any one might ſtumble into ſeparation. They do indeed hold, That Holineſs is neceſſary in a Prieſt *neceſſitate præcepti*, and I hope even He will not deny that, but that they hold it not abſolutly neceſſary, *neceſſitate medii*, ſo as that the abſence thereof will make *a nullity* in all Miniſterial Acts, or render them *utterly void, and of none effect*; and that's as much as he can prove. The Papiſts then are taught no ſuch matter.

§ 2. Proteſtants may without contradiction to their principles, ſeparate from a perſon who by Law is veſted with all the Tythes, Profits, Perquiſites, Emoluments of a Pariſh whatſoever, whether he be called Parſon, Vicar, Curate, if withal he be ignorant, and not apt to teach, Erronious, and does worſe then *not teach*, and ſcandalouſly prophane, and ſo does unteach all he taught before: He muſt have a good Stomack that can receive the Sacramental bread from him, out of whoſe naſty hands I could not take my Corporal Bread, without a Vomit.

If a Preacher ſhall conſtantly Preach Hereſies, and damnable Doctrines, ſuch as the entertainment of them would deſtroy my Soul, muſt I venture the ruine of it out of civility and run the riſq; of being damned for fear of one of thoſe Theological Scarcrows, which men have ſet up to fright us into Compliance. Can I in Faith expect that God will *deliver me from Evil*, when I *lead my ſelf into Temptation*? Can I hope that he will preſerve my Judgement untainted, when I expoſe my ſelf to be practiſed upon, by the cunning inſinuations of a ſly deceiver, and ſet my ſelf as a mark for Satan to ſhoot at? Mr. *Harding* I remember preſſes the Reverend *Juel* with this. *Be the Biſhop of* Rome's *life never ſo wicked, yet we may not ſever our ſelves from the Church of* Rome. The Learned Man Anſwers from *Cyprian*, , Plebs obſequens præceptis Dominicis, & Deum metuens, à , peccatore præpoſito ſeparare ſe debet. *A People that obey Gods commands, and fears him* (not only may, but) *ought to ſeparate from a wicked Miniſter*, Art. 4. And yet he underſtood the Principles of Proteſtants as well as our *Enquirer*.

But

But let *Cyprianus Africanus* go which way he pleases, we have a greater than he, *Cyprianus Anglicus*, who in his discourse with *Fisher*, from that Text, *Rom.* 16. 20. *Mark them which cause divisions amongst you*: Observes to us, That [illegible] *the causer of the Division is the Schismatick.*

The prudence which we use in flying the Contagion of a scandalous Minister, does not imply, that all his *Ministerial Acts are meer Nullities*, nor that God may not possibly concur with his Ministry to advance my Spiritual welfare, but that a Soul is *a Being so precious*, bought with *a Price so precious*, the loss of it *so irrecoverable*, and my whole concerns *embarqued in the bottom*, that I ought not to expose it to apparent danger, upon presumption of what God can, or may do; for ordinarily we know that God delights to serve himself of the labours of those Instruments, who having dedicated themselves inwardly to the Service of God in the Gospel, do Sincerely design, and Zealously pursue the glorifying of his Name, in the turning Sinners from their evil ways to God; which we may reasonably suspect of them, whose Lives witness that they have no concern for others Salvation, who have so little for their own.

The Apostle *Paul* commands his Son *Timothy*, 1 Ep. 4. 16. *To take heed to himself, and so the Doctrine*; for in so doing he should *both save himself, and those that heard him.* More then implying that the Soul of another will never be dear to him, to whom his own Soul is cheap: As my running from a *Pest-house* does not suppose that all must *necessarily die* that come within its Walls, but that it becomes a prudent Man to dwell, not where he may *possibly escape death*, but where he may *most probably secure his life*: So my with-drawing from an heretical and scandalous Minister, does not imply a necessity of damnation by attending upon his Ministry, but that a Soul is too precious a concern to be put to that adventure.

In all matters of lesser moment we exercise our wisdom freely, without the least scruple in our selves, or rebuke from others. If an Act of Parliament were made, by advise of the Convocation it self, that no sick person should consult any other Physician, but only him that dwells in the Parish; nor any one to take advise of other Councellor, than him that dwells in the Village; he that knows how difficult it is to keep, and preserve health and estate, how much more difficult to recover them when lost, would without any Prefaces of Modesty, take leave to seek out the most experienced in their faculties, and to become a civil Non-conformist to those Injunctions: There's no Man but will tell Money after his own Father; and thinks it no incivility that he will see with his own Eyes, and not anothers; and why my Soul must be hazarded in a Complement, as if it were the most inconsiderable trifle in the world, I cannot once Imagine.

And the rather, because, if *by my imprudent choice* I should destroy my Soul, the sin and guilt will lye upon my self alone; but

but if I ſhould ruine it by the neglect of timely eſcape, none can give me ſecurity that he will anſwer for my folly before the Judge of all the Earth.

Nor can it be imagined, that I ſhould be ſuch an Enemy to my own Soul, as to deſtroy it wilfully; or that any other ſhould have a greater kindneſs for it than my ſelf; and when I find them not over tender of my Body, Eſtate, Liberty, Good Name, Life or Livelyhood, which they have ſeen, they have cautioned me into a jealouſie that they can have no ſuch miraculous good will to my better part which they have not ſeen.

I have heard of a Gentleman, who having a Son fitted by Academick Learning for ſome ſerviceableneſs and employment, was much perplext within himſelf, upon what particular Calling to fix for a future livelyhood: He conſults his Friends, and with them thus Debates the Caſe, If I deſign him a Phyſician, he muſt ſtudy long, and gain good experience, before any judicious perſon will put his Life into his Hand, which he values ſo dear: If I ſhould educate him towards the Law, he muſt wear out many a year before the wary World will intruſt an Eſtate under his management: The only way therefore will be to make him a Miniſter, for ſuch are the low thoughts Men have of their Souls, that they will intruſt them with the moſt raw, and unexperienc'd Novice.

Hitherto his diſcourſe has proceeded upon a ſuppoſition, that the Charge had been true, yet the Inference he thinks would have been falſe, but now he comes roundly to the denial of the Charge, and a laborious confutation of it to no purpoſe.

1. *Combined wit and malice* (ſays *our Enquirer*) *ſhall not be able to fix any ſcandal upon the Body of the* Engliſh *Clergy*. I hope they never ſhall! Nor have I met with any ſo abſurd and diſingenuous, as for the ſake of *ſome*, though *many individuals* to caſt an aſperſion upon *a whole Society*, excepting thoſe who have *leaſt Reaſon* If the Body of the Clergy be Innocent, all the Combinations of wit and malice ſhall not be able to Eclipſe their unſpotted Innocency; that it ſhall break more gloriouſly through thoſe envious Clouds which had obſcured its brightneſs; and if they be Peccant, all the combined Wit and Rhetorick in the World will not wipe away the guilt and filth; it muſt be Repentance and Reformation that can only be their Compurgators.

1. Firſt then concerning *their Learning*: a thing that has been hitherto indiſputable, and may continue ſo ſtill, if the weakneſs of this Gentlemans proofs do not render the truth of the propoſition ſuſpected. But hear his Arguments.

1. *If the Preacking of the preſent Age be not better than that of the former, I would fain know the Reaſon why the Homilies are in no greater Reputation.* And ſo would I too! In thoſe Ancient Sermons there are *Two things* eſpecially remarkable; the Phraſe or Cloathing, and the matter or ſubſtance of them. 'Tis true, Time, and the growing refinings of the *Engliſh* Language have ſuperannuated the former; but why the latter ſhould alſo become

come obsolete, I would as fain know a Reason *at himself*; and that *from himself*, who is best able to account for his own Actions: I assure him I would not exchange the *Old Truth* for *New Phrases*, and *Modern Elegancy*: I had rather see *Plain Truth*, in her sober homely garb, than gawdy error spruced up with all the fineries of the Scene and Stage.

The weakness of *the former* Clergy, was the great Reason that introduced both *Liturgies and Homilies*. And if *the present* Clergy are grown so strong that they can despise *one of their Crutches*, perhaps in time they may go alone *without both*. Those Cogent Reasons pretended for the necessity of *the one*, will hold as strongly for *the other*; 'tis full as easie to disseminate Heresies, to vent crude, raw, undigested Non-sense in *the Pulpit*, as *the Desk*.

When I hear any of our *Enquirers* Sermons, I shall summon up my best Reason to make a judgment, whether he has so infinitely *cut-done the Ancient Homilies*, as he pretends: In the mean time I fear the Language is not so much polished, and tricked up, as the Doctrine is defiled; nor have they shamed the Homilies so much in briskness of Fancy, quaintness of Words, and smoothness of Cadencies, as the Homilies have shamed them in plainness and soundness of Truth: I would mind our Author of the last words of the second part of *the Homily of Salvation*, and though he may mend *the Phrase*, I doubt he will hardly mend *the Doctrine*. *So that our Faith in Christ (as it were) saith thus unto us: It is not I that take away your sins, but it is Christ only, and to him I send you for that purpose; forsaking therein all your good Vertues, Words, Thoughts and Works, and only putting your trust in Christ.* In the Homily of the Place, and time of Prayer, the Church praises God, for *purging our Churches from Piping, Chanting, as wherewith God is so sore displeased, and the House of Prayer defiled.* Hence perhaps some would conclude, that the true Reason why we have forsaken *the use*, is, because we have forsaken *the Doctrine* of the Homilies.

2. Arg. *All Protestants abroad admire the English way of Preaching, insomuch as some forrein Congregations, as I am credibly informed*, (that was wisely inferred) *defray the charges of the Travels of their Pastors into England, that they may return to them instructed in the Method of the* English *Preaching.* For the Logick of this Paragraph I shall not so much as examine it, *All* Protestants admire *English Preaching*, for *some* Congregations *send to be instructed in't.* There's the *all and some* of this Argument. Again, Protestants admire *English Preaching*; ergo they admire the *Conformists Preaching*; for All Dissenters preach in *an unknown tongue.* Again, they send them hither to be instructed in the method of English Preaching; all the excellency then lies in the method, which is to Preach *without Doctrine, Reason, and Use*: And now methinks I hear a Pastor of a Congregation in *Holland*, returning home with a flea in his Ear, and giving an account of the expence of his time and charges; *Beloved!*

loved! we have been ſadly miſtaken all this while, for our Synod of Dort *was a pack of ſilly ignorant fellows, that knew not how to make God Juſt, unleſs they made him Cruel; or Man humble, unleſs they made him a Stock or a Stone: As for us, we are informed, that we are not true Miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt, as wanting a thing, I think, they call it Epiſcopal Ordination, and if any of us ſhould become Miniſters there, we muſt be re-ordained, though a Prieſt from* Rome *ſhall not need it: and therefore by conſequence your Baptiſm is a nullity, all our Miniſterial acts void, and of none effect, your Churches are not true Churches, your Reformation was began in Rebellion, continued in Schiſm, and thus I have got my labour for my pains, and naught for my labour.*

3. Arg. *The Preaching of the Church of* England *is beyond that of* Rome. Yes ſo it may be, and yet none of the beſt neither; what ſleighty Topicks are theſe from whence to evince the excellency of Engliſh Preaching: Commend me to read *one Sermon* in the works of the Learned *B. Reynolds*, and it ſtorms the incredulous ſooner then a hundred of theſe Ridicules put together: But how does it appear that the Engliſh tranſcends the Romiſh Preaching? pray mark the proof: why *Eraſmus wrote a Book of the Art of Preaching, and full of the follies and ridiculous paſſages in Popiſh Sermons.* Moſt Meridian Conviction! Has not *J. E.* written a Book alſo *full of the follies and ridiculous paſſages in Engliſh Sermons?* Pray then ſet the *Hares head* againſt the *Gooſe Giblets.* Ah! but *Eraſmus* his Book is *as full* as his: very good, and ſo is his as full as *Eraſmus's*: Really when the Act comes out againſt Metaphors, I hope there will be a clauſe in't, that no Rhetorician ſhall ever again uſe an Argument.

As he would be injurious to the Truth that ſhould take the follies gathered up in this modern Author for the meaſure of preſent Preaching, ſo ſhall he be equally vain, that ſhall make thoſe impertinencies gleaned up by *Eraſmus*, to be the true meaſure of the Preaching of thoſe times: And why may we not charitably ſuppoſe, that the Romaniſts have furbiſht up their ruſty Preaching ſince the days of *Eraſmus*, as well as we have ſcowred up ours ſince the days of the Homilies?

3. *Arg.* His fourth Argument is none of *the ſtrongeſt*, and yet worth *all the reſt* put together: which were but the vaunt-courriers to uſher in this main one with more ſolemnity. *Compare* (ſays he) *but the Preachings generally in our Churches, with thoſe ordinarily in Conventicles, you will find them unequally matcht.*

Though we could be content they were *modeſtly compared*, yet we can by no means allow this *Enquirer* to uſe his own *falſe weights* of comparing, and generally ſuch *compariſons are odious.* Non-conformiſts do not affect ſtrong lines, nor are ambitious of the Gigantick Vein and Stile, they ſtudy not meaſured ſentences, nor uſe the Compaſſes to every decent period, they had rather with their *Auſtin*, have *A wooden Key that will open the Lock, then one of Gold, which makes a fidling din, in the Wards, and yet confounds them.*

None of them but do praiſe God for the Learning, ſound Judgement, ſolid Preaching, holy Lives, which are to be found among the Conformable Clergy, but can he rear his Triumphant Arches to their praiſes upon no other foundations, then the ruines of other mens credits.

For my part, I am always apt to ſuſpect that perſons credibility, who thinks more to confirm it by two or three ratling Oaths: And I never received it as an argument of her honeſty, that carries her tongue ſo looſely hung, that ſhe deals about moſt liberally *Strumpet and Whore*; but I ſee he is impatient till he compares them.

On the one ſide you have ſound Theology, ſtrength of Argument, gravity of Expreſſion, diſtinctneſs of Method; on the other ſide nothing more frequent, then puerile, and flat, oftentimes rude, and ſometimes blaſphemous expreſſions, ſimilitudes inſtead of arguments, and either Apiſh geſtures, or Tragical vociferations inſtead of Eloquence. Reader, this Language is pure *Cicero*, I aſſure thee, *Ex hac enim parte Pudor pugnat, illinc petulantia, hinc pietas, illinc ſtupram; hinc fides, illinc fraudatio.*

I am ſorry our *Enquirer* dwells by ſo very bad Neighbours, that his own mouth muſt be the very Trumpeter of his praiſes; If the common Cryer could have been engaged for love or money to proclaim them, no modeſt man would have done the drudgery. But *nemo patriam ſuam amavit quia magna eſt ſed quia ſua.* 'Tis propriety that renders all things ſweet and beautiful; All this had been pardonable, but I ſee ſome that love to be *Ingenioſi in alienâ famâ*; huge facetious upon other mens fames, and perhaps never witty in a Twelve-month, but when they write Satyr.

As all impartial Readers know *one half of his Oratory to be falſe*, ſo its to be feared they may ſuſpect *the other moyety* not to be very true: Thats all an *honeſt man* ſhall get by being in *a Knaves company*: Truth has ſometimes been ſet in the Stocks, becauſe it has been found under the ſame Roof with *Falſhood*. He that wiſhes well to *his own due praiſes*, let him never deſire, they ſhould be yoaked with *anothers unjuſt reproach*; leaſt the hearer knowing *the one unrighteouſly ſlandered*, conclude that the other is as *unjuſtly flattered*. For its an unqueſtionable maxime, He that will be *a Sycophant* againſt *one*, will be *a Paraſite* to *another*.

Let our *Enquirer* then ſweetly enjoy the raviſhments of his pleaſing Dreams, I ſhall not awaken him with loud recriminations, only ſoftly whiſper that of the Poet.

Bella es; novimus! & Puella; verum eſt!
Et Dives; Quis enim poteſt negare?
Sed dum te nimium. Fabulla, laudas
Nec Dives, nec Bella, nec Puella es. Mart. Ep. l. 1. 165.

Yet there is one *Salvo* for their credits, which all the Fraternity of Gentlemen-Raylers do uſe to bring themſelves off, and heal all again, when at any time they have moſt unconſcionably overlaſht:

laſht: and that is, when they have pour'd out all the contempt and ſcorn, have heap'd up all the ſlanders and reproaches that they can make or rake together, then to make an Honourable Retreat, and tell you, they do confeſs there may be one or two that may be innocent.

God forbid (ſays our Gentleman) *that I ſhould charge all the Non-conformiſts with ſuch Indecencies.* Nay I can tell him more then that: God forbids him to charge *any one with ſuch Indecencies*, unleſs he had better proof of them: And had he known any individual guilty of theſe crimes, he ſhould have perſonally charged *that one*, that he might be brought to Repentance for his prophanation of Gods holy Name, and not involve *a whole party* under the ſcandalous ſuſpicion; All the charity that theſe words neceſſarily contain is, that they are All ſuch *ſave one.*

Suppoſe another as charitable as himſelf, ſhould write after his Copy, and when he had with much pleaſant Scurrility and Drollery made the Devil ſport with the Indecencies of Churchmen, ſhould come off at laſt with this Epanorthoſis. *God forbid I ſhould charge all the Conformiſts with theſe extravagancies*; what would it argue but a more crafty and ſafe way of Hypocritical Calumny? Thus I remember a Gentleman once in a frolick, told his Companions, *They were all Fools but one*; and when a young Gallant of the knot, more tender of his Reputation then it deſerved, and willing to venture more for it then 'twas worth, *began to draw*, The other takes him aſide, and whiſpers him in the Ear, *How do you know but that I intended your ſelf, by that ſingle exception*; And this little duſt parted the fray.

Well, I ſee he is ſick till he comes to particulars; *Aſahel* would not take *Abners* civil warning; ſome men ſeek miſchief to themſelves, and all the Friends they have cannot ſtave them off from the Duel; the more you hold a Coward, the more eager he is to engage; let the man alone, pray let him alone, and in the mean time, I will fortifie my ſelf with patience, that no provocation of his, may tempt me to *a back blow under the fifth rib*; for *how then ſhould I lift up my face to my dear Brethren?*

1. *Their Sermons are generally about Predeſtination.* About it? *πολλὰ μὰ βοῶν ἔπεσιν*; what a word was that for a wiſe man? The Church of *England* in her 17*th.* Article propounds the Doctrine of Predeſtination to be believed by us, according to the Scriptures; that which is *the matter of Faith*, ought to be *the ſubject of our Preachings*, 1 Cor. 4. 13. *we believe, and therefore we ſpeak.* And yet I am confident that our *Enquirer*, and his like, preach more, write more, and make more noiſe about that ſerious point, then the Non-conformiſts. I preſume I may have heard my ſhare of their Sermons, and yet I can aſſure the Reader, I never heard that Doctrine profeſſedly handled in my life; I ſpeak not this in their excuſe, or commendation, no, 'tis their juſt Reproof, and were I *meet* to give them their due, I would ſpeedily come out of their debt: what ſhall the great *Truths of the Goſpel*, the *Articles of the Church of* England, the famous

St. Austin be trampled in the Dirt by the Foot of Insolence, and shall a pretence of I know not what modesty, unwillingness to offend them that are resolved to be offended, stop your mouths? Reverend Sirs! Its high time to awake, and plead the cause of God, least he give you up to reproach and contumely, because you have left his truth so.

If the Reader be so curious as to enquire wherein lies the great evil of Preaching *about Predestination*, he may know, that there is a Preaching *about*, id est, *Pro*: and there is a Preaching *about*, id est, *Con*: To Preach *about it*, when it signify's *for it*, that indeed is *scandalous and dangerous*: but to Preach *about it*, when it signifies *against it*, that indeed is *laudable*, for its well known, that when the *Arminian* faction got a little Heart in the rising days of *A. B. Laud*, the Abetters of those novelties procured a Proclamation, that none should meddle *about* those controversies, pretending they were *nice School-points*, unfit *for vulgar Ears*, but presently the *Arminians* fell pell-mell upon fiery Declamations *against them*.

2. *They Preach about Union with God and Christ*. About it still! I doubt not but this Gentleman could be willing the Dissenters had free liberty to Preach again, provided they Preacht about *just nothing*. If the Church-doors were unlockt, the Pulpit-doors set wide open, and their Mouths sealed up, and a Padlock hung upon their Bibles, the case would be much the same; But to speak freely, if they did Preach *about it*, at the rates that many write *about it*, reducing all to a *Politick Union*, e'ne Nail up their Pulpits, and set the Arrow-head upon the doors of their Meetings: 'Tis then no such heinous crime to Preach *about it*, you may Preach *about, and about, and about the Bush again*, provided you never come near it, or doff it off with an *Airy nothing*.

Ay, *but the* N. C. *confess this Union to be unintelligible, and they help to make it so*. There are many great Truths in the Gospel, which in their heigths and depths, in their utmost improvements, we cannot comprehend; yet such a knowledge of them is attainable, as may whet the edge of our Appetite after more, and in the mean time direct us in our Duties towards God and Man, the perfect opening of which mysteries is reserved for Heaven, when *we shall see face to face, and know as we are also known*. He that will throw away *every Object* of Knowledge which he cannot *Fadom*, must throw away the two great Volumes of *Scripture and Nature*; The Doctrine of the Trinity is certainly owned in the 39 Articles, and yet what ever Key the great engrossers of reason have got to that Tremendous Mystery, in my Judgement there's an unintelligible depth in it, for which Faith must lie at the stake, and the veracity of God be responsible.

Our Union with God and Christ have been cleared up from the Scriptures, to stay the Stomacks, and give some present satisfaction to the Holy Ardency of True Believers; and yet though the thing in its own Nature be Cognoscible, yet so glorious are the

the Priviledges that flow from it, such the Mercies which issue out in Eternal Life, that we freely confess our Ignorance; *Eye has not seen, nor Ear heard, nor has it enter'd into the Heart of Man*, (such poor Men as we are) to conceive all those Comforts which lie in the bosom of that Relation, and which God has laid up in store for those that are *in Covenant* with him. *Whatever is Received*, must be so *according to the capacity of the Recipient*; we do not thinck that *the Ocean* can be put into *narrow mouth'd Vessels*; when God shall raise our Faculties, and enlarge our Capacities, that we can *hold* more, he will *give* more; and therefore leaving the sublime speculative Gnosticks to their own fancies, we shall bless God for what we *know*, and humbly aspire after greater Measures of Divine Light

3. They preach *of the sweetness, beauty, and loveliness of Christs Person*. They do so! and are willing to be Criminal; if this be a Crime, our *Enquirer* bewails *the want of love amongst Christians*; and if he were as sollicitous to enquire into *the Reasons of that defect*, he would find this to be *a main one*, that the *loveliness of Christ* is so much depreciated: He that cannot *love Christ*, cannot possibly *love a Christian*; since that for which every Christian *as such* is *Amiable*, must be that he partakes of those Graces for which *Christ is Amiable*: It's an Humane Love that only eys *our own Image*, but a Divine Grace that loves *the Image of a Saviour*: But these things were not reproach in those days, when *Ignatius* upon every mention of Christ stiled him *his Love*, Ὁ ἐμὸς μοῦ ἐσταύρωται. My Love is Crucified! But that the Preaching *of Christs Loveliness stirs up sensual Passions*, is a note of blasphemy *above Elo*, not to be parallel'd but by *the Friendly Debate*, whose Dunghill our *Enquirer* has first *Raked*, and then *Epitomiz'd*.

And thus much shall suffice at present to have descanted upon the Ignorance of *the Non-conformists Preaching*: Now wipe your Eyes, and you shall read a Specimen of *his own*.

I have seen a Picture of such artificial contrivance, that as we enter'd the Room, it presented to us the ridiculous prospect of *the Cat and the Fiddle*: we had not traversed a few paces to the other side, but it was by a strange *Metamorphosis* become a very *Beautiful Lady*: Curiosity drew me nearer to view the Mystery of this *dubious Piece*, and it soon discovered it self a trivial Essay of *Mechanisme*: Thus when we enter'd upon this Subject, the *Enquirer* gave us, the Non-conformist, and his Preaching in Ridicule; now turn you twice about, and in a trice the Scene is changed, and you shall have the lively Pourtraiture of a Rational Divine in all his Pontificalibus.

And here first we meet with Discourses *of God, his Nature, and Attributes*: Which if some of them *found not* so, they have *left unintelligible*. Such a *Nature* as they have *contrived*, such *Attributes* as they are graciously pleased to assign to him; so that *Tertullians* complaint is not *more frequently* than *justly* repeated. *God shall not be God, but upon such Terms as Man shall prescribe*. And then *of the Reasons of Religion*. Yes *no doubt you are the*

Men, and all Wisdom shall die with you. What a sad Case had *Religion* been in, if these Eminent Men had not been raised up to set *Religion* upon its proper *Basis*, and unsettle it from the feeble foundations upon which former Ages had erected it? But then they give us *Arguments for contentment*, under persecution perhaps, such as would make a Man weary of his life, and almost Petition to be Hang'd. And *of Reverence* too; consisting in uncommanded postures of bowing at *the Naming of Jesus*, worshipping towards the *East*, *and Altar*; and *of Submission*, viz. Of *Private Reason and Conscience to the Publick*. But of all, and of all they excel when they Treat of *the Eternal Reasons of Good and Evil*; A Point admirably fitted to the Capacities of *the vulgar*, which *nothing but unskilfulness could make a Man bold enough to undertake the unfolding of. An dantur Æternæ Rationes Boni & Mali, in mente Divinâ indispensabiles?* Oh how the Ladies sit and admire this profound Theology! Notions which cannot be Characteriz'd better than in *Gondiberts* Phrase, — *To charm the Weak, and pose the Wise*, But then they Treat *of the Nature of Faith*. And how there's nothing a *justifying and saving Faith as such*, but what the Devils can shew for it: And to conclude *of Charity* too, to all of their own Cue, to a hairs breadth, with Denunciation of Fire and Faggot, to all that come not up to their *Apices Juris*, and jump not in, with every Iota, and Tittle of Conformity: I had almost forgot their discourses *of Obedience to Magistrates*; I suppose *this Enquirer* has *not very long* Treated of that Subject; the meaning of it is, so long as they are well paid for their pains: *O Emperour* (said one) *Defend me with thy Sword, and I'le Defend thee with my Quill*! Could you blame him? It will cost more to maintain *an Army*, than *a Penny worth of Quills*: Notwithstanding all these Bravadoes, the World must see, if their Eyes be not out, that Dissenters give more real obedience to Magistrates, for *bare life, and uncertain liberty*, than some do for all these Revenues, which publick Indulgence has loaded them withal; for when the Finger of the Magistrate is put forth to touch them, *not in skin or bone*, but some sorty *Accident*, they are ready to make good the Devils charge, *and curse him to his face.*

2. He has done with the Learning, and will now come to *the Lives of the Clergie*: Whatever good he shall speak of the Clergy, I can heartily agree with him in it, provided he could forbear the disparagement of others: Let it be accorded that *the Lives of the generality of Church-men are unblamable*: yet *that they need no foyl to set them off*: is such a childish way of wheedling our belief of it, as if a Jeweller should shew you *a Stone with its foyl*, and then protest it *needs none.*

Here then needed no Quarrel; we can rejoyce in, and Bless God for *the Graces*, as well as *Gifts*; the *Piety*, as well as *the Learning* of our Brethren who differ from us. Nay we can pray to God *to double his Spirit* upon them in both respects, and for those who deride the Grace and Spirit of God, we can pray that God

God would give them a sounder mind: We pray that there may be such burning and shining lights found amongst all them that profess the Reformed Religion, however in small matters varying, as may confound Atheism and Popery, with whatsoever is contrary to sound Doctrine and Godliness; but yet this *Compassionate Enquirer*, that he may not be uncivil, nor pass by the door of a Non-conformist without a Salute, will call in, and say a word or two to them, when he has first given us a Reason why he will Treat them like *Christians*.

1. R. Because he *will not render Evil for Evil, nor Retaliate the Reproaches cast upon the Sons of the Church; for he has not so learn'd Christ.* And doubtless he that has learn'd Christ to any purpose, either in his *Example or Doctrine*, must learn quite *another Lesson* than *foul Language*, and blackmouth'd *Barking*, or he has gone to School to no purpose, and must come back to his Horn-book, and begin at *Christs-Cross*.

2. R. *Such uncharitable Recriminations have not only made an Apology for Atheism, and the prophaneß of the Age, but they afford a pleasant spectacle to all wicked Men.*

3. R. It taken from the Example of *Constantine the Great, who when the Bishops and Clergie at the* Nicene *Council had exhibited a bundle of Libels one against another, burnt them all before their faces, protesting that if he should see one of them in the most scandalous Commission, he would cover his shame with his own Purple.*

Being therefore convinced, that *all Recriminations are unbecoming the Gospel*, and that from the nervousness of our *Enquirers* Arguments, I will make a reasonable motion, That all *the Friendly Debates*, the *Ecclesiastical Policies*, with the foulmouth'd *Cobler of* Gloucesters *Canto's*, be condemned to *the next solemn Bonefire.* Unless you will make the *Compassionate Enquiry* the Protomartyr: And add *the Porter*, who when he should have covered *the Scandalous Commission with his Frock*, openly exposed it *upon his Back.*

These *Massive Reasons* (one would think) might have sunk any *ordinary Mans* railing inclinations into a *modest silence*, and suspended his proclivity to reviling, *ab officio* for three years; and yet (like *a compassionate, self-consistent*, or *self-condemned* Enquirer) he *will say these two things further in this Case.* Nay, I did look for it every moment, and that all those Reasons against slander were but a *foyl* to set off *Hypocrisie, prophaning of Scripture*, and the *debauching of his Conscience*, with a greater Grace, when he shall come to blazon the scandalous Impieties of *the Non conformist Ministers.*

And here I first got a satisfactory in-sight into one truth more, That there is the same proportion, between *the Title*, and *the Book*, that there is between his *Rhetorick*, and his *Reason*. The *Title* calls the *Book*, A *serious and compassionate Enquirer*: but the *Book* ingenuously calls *it self*, *The ridiculous and passionate Enquiry* And if they thus revile and scold at *one another*, we must not admire if both join in reviling the Dissenters.

2. Two things then he has to say; And *the first* of them is *Three things alone*,

§ 1. *If a man be male-content with the Government, and forsaking the Church, resort to private Assemblies, such a man may debauch his life too, and yet have a very charitable construction among the generality of Dissenters.* That is, if a man will be a Rascal *in one particular*, he may be a Villain *in all the rest*, provided he become a Non-conformist: Ay! *Sit Sacrilegus, sit fur, sit vitiorum omnium flagitiorumque princeps — At est Bonus Fanaticus*! Come but over *to their way*, and you may Lye, and Steal, and Whore, and Drink, and be Drunk! this was spoken without all peradventure out of *tenderness of Conscience*, to fulfil that *Royal command*, of *not rendring evil for evil*? That it might appear how well he had *learned Christ*. But let him know, that they allow *no Non-conformity*, to compound for *severe Piety*; nor *Dissent from Ceremonies*, to substitute *Assent to the substantials of Christianity*. He that is not brought over to the Obedience of the Gospel, is with them no Christian, by what *Name or Title soever he be dignified or distinguished*; and I seriously desire, that this *ever-charged slander* may not *recoil*, and *hurt the Enquirer*.

But though he be very *uncharitable*, I shall endeavour to give the most *charitable* construction of his words that they will bear; And therefore observe, That though he be engaged *not to render evil for evil*, yet he never promised *not to render evil for good*.

§ 2. *If being a Clergy-man* (says he) *and continuing in the Church, he shall debauch his Office, and undermine the Church which he should uphold, such an man* (also) *may then debauch his life too, and yet have a very charitable construction among the generality of Dissenters.*

What must Enemies expect from this Man, who has no mercy on his Friends? There are many Holy and Learned persons, now within the Bosom of the Church, who having considered *the terms of enjoying the more publick exercise of their Ministry*, have overcome *the difficulties of Subscription*; and do yet retain their former Orthodoxy, and sobriety of Conversation; These persons knowing *what Conscience is*, do exercise *great tenderness towards it* in their Brethren, who cannot get over *their rubs, and obstacles*; and these, if I mistake not, are *the Glory* of the Church of *England*, for *purity of Doctrine*, and *piety of Conversation*, for all *true Learning*, and *useful knowledge*; Against these persons, The *Enquirer* has *a desperate stitch*, as those that *undermine the Church which they should uphold*: that is, if they condescend never so little to *a tender Conscience*, in one of those *little institutions*, which themselves cal *indifferent*, the whole Church must presently *fall about their Ears*: but if the Church were built *upon Christ the Rock*, and not upon the *Woolpacks* of Ceremonies, such condescension would never undermine it: These are taxed also with *debauching their Office*. And indeed if *the Office* of Ministers be to become *Informers*; If *Preaching the Gospel* be nothing but to make *a Pother about Ceremonies*,

I hope

I hope they will *debauch it ſtill*; but that any of theſe do debauch *their Lives*, and are thereupon *more acceptable to Diſſenters*, is *a lewd falſhood*, only to let us underſtand how wel he has *learned Chriſt*.

§ 3. *If a man* (ſays he) *be of the moſt Holy Converſation, but Zealous for the Intereſt of the Church, this man ſhall have worſe Quarter from the fiery Zealots of other parties, then one of a more looſe life, and meaner abilities.* Let no man reply, *If a man be of a looſe Converſation, and but Zealous of the Grandeur, and for the Ceremonies of the Church, this man ſhall have fairer quarter, and more encouraging preferments, from the fiery Bigots of Conformity, then one of a ſevere life, and greater miniſterial Abilities.* To interpret this myſtery, we muſt inform our ſelves, what is the Churches true Intereſt as it is a Church: Its very eaſie to miſtake in ſtating the True intereſt of any Society, and if we miſtake *there*, its impoſſible we ſhould be *regular* in the *means* of purſuing it. *An errour in the firſt concoction is never rectified in the ſecond*: The true Intereſt of every true Church of Chriſt, is to promote Holineſs, and Conformity to his Commands, engaging thereby his preſence and protection; and a Spirit of Love and Peace amongſt its members; though under ſome variety of apprehenſion in Adiaphorous matters: The *miſtake* is to advance a Churches ſecular Grandeur, external ſplendour, and *worldly pomp*, which every true Chriſtian *in his Baptiſm* has renounced, together with *all the works of the Devil*, and *the luſts of the fleſh*: If ever a Church ſhall be *ſo far miſtaken* as to judge *worldly Glory*, its true intereſt, I know not why it may not alſo miſtake *the works of the Devil*, and *the luſts of the fleſh* to be its true Intereſt alſo: A Conforming Miniſter, who deſpiſing *that falſe*, underſtands and purſues *this true* Intereſt, is truly dear to all the Non-conformiſts; but for thoſe who are ſo deluded as to think, it lies in deſtroying and ruining all that are not ſatisfied with their Canons and Conſtitutions, however aliene and forreign to the temper of the Goſpel, they confeſs they are no great admirers of them, whatever appearance of Holineſs they may make: If the Intereſt of a Faction, ſhall lie in ſending poor Chriſtians to the *Alms-houſe of* New-gate, and *the Hoſpital of* Bedlam, and will give no Quarter to the moſt Holy, and Religious, if they fail in two or three Niceties, I muſt needs ſay I ſee no reaſon why ſuch ſhould adorn themſelves with the plumes of *Gravity and Devotion*, to render their Inhumanity more plauſible.

2. But he has ſomewhat further to ſay then all this: *If impertinent, and fantaſtical talking of Religion, endleſs ſcrupuloſities, cenſorium, and raſh judging our Superiours, Melancholy ſighing, going from Sermon to Sermon, without allowing our ſelves time to meditate on what we hear, or to inſtruct our Families, be the main Points of Religion, then the Non-conformiſts are Holy Men.* And now I hope the Reader is abundantly ſatisfied, that the *Enquirer* has *otherwiſe Learned Chriſt, than to render Evil for Evil, that he dares not furniſh Atheiſm and Prophaneſs with an Apologie: That he makes a Conſcience of affording a ſpectacle to evil Men: That*

he dares not (for a World) *dress Religion in a Phantastical Habit, that Boys may laugh at it*: This is *his* Constantines *Robe which he casts over scandalous Commissions.*

Serious Discourses about the concerns of the World to come, about our own death, and the day of Judgment, is *Phantastical talking*: *Tenderness of Conscience, Holy fear of sinning against God*, is *endless scrupulosity*; *Modest refusal* to practise every thing commanded, though Reason, Judgement, Scripture Reclaim, is *Censuring and Rash Judgment of Superiours. Godly sorrow* must be *melancholly sighing*; *attending upon Gods Word Preached*, shall be *running from Sermon to Sermon*: And a downright falshood added to close up the whole: That they neither *allow themselves time to meditate of what they have heard, nor to instruct their Families*: And yet if they shall dare to practise this last, with a few of their weaker Neighbours that drop in *to hear a Sermon repeated*, they shall be lyable to the Law, and punished as *Seditious Conventiclers*, and railed at as *Schismatiks.*

When all is said and done, *Machiavils* old Rule is a Sacred Maxime with these sort of Men; *Fortiter calumniare, aliquid adhærebit*: *Throw Dirt enough, and some ont' will stick. Wild-fire* flies further, than *the Water* that should *Quench it*: A Reproach *will run*, where a *just Vindication* will not *creep*: Had the Providence of God allotted the Non-conformists their abode any where but amongst those whose Interest it is *to render them Odious*, they might have pass'd *for good Christians*: It would be difficult to *hire Men* to be *Instruments of Cruelty*, if they were not first perswaded, that they are *Ministers of Justice*; and the only way to perswade that, is to represent Dissenters as *the off-scowring of all things not fit to live a day*: The best way *to take away* the life, is to render it *abominable*. None can *handsomly be destroyed*, till they be dress'd up in *a Malefactors Cloaths*. And it seems as much for their Enemies Advantage to make them *seem* wicked, as 'tis for theirs to be *really* Holy.

It had been a more Important Enquiry, than any he has yet made, whence such an exulcerated Spirit should proceed? The Gospel is a *Message* of Peace from *the God* of Peace, by *the Prince* of Peace, to *the Sons of Peace*; which Gospel breaths nothing but *healing Counsels*, drops down the Balmy Dews of *Gentleness, Meekness, Patience, Long-suffering, Charity*; and if I might borrow an old Maxime at second hand from him: 'Aut hoc non est Evangelium aut nos non sumus Evangelici: Either *Charity is not Gospel*, or our *Enquirer* is *an Infidel.*

It's a grave Axiome in the Law; That *his Cause ought more to be favoured, who only seeks to avoid wrong, than his that seeks to get Gain.* The Dissenters humbly plead the Benefit of it: They grudge them not their *Preferments, and Accumulated Dignities*; they neither envy nor seek their Great things: They only deprecate Ruine till they shall deserve it: It's only *from a Prison*, not *for a Palace* that they Petition: When others have got *the Two Swords, the Secular and the Spiritual*, they only crave the protection

tection of *the Defensive Shield*: And think they may with some Reason demand of them who Deifie *the freedom of Humane Will*, that they may be indulged in *the freedom of their Consciences regulated by the Word of God.*

CHAP. II.

Of the more Remote Causes of the infelicities of this Church: The Persecution under Q. Mary: The bad provisions for Ministers in Corporations: Frequent Wars: The mischiefs of Trade and Travel: The Designs of Atheists and Papists enquired into; with what influence they may have had upon the present separation from the Church of England.

When *Adrian* VI. was pressed by the clamorous Importunity of the *German* Princes to Reform the Clergy, he answered very gravely, That *a Reformation was necessary, yet the danger of Reforming all at once was so dreadful, that he resolved to proceed step by step.* Some Wise Men smiled at the cautious Advisement of his *Holiness*, and said, They hoped he would not break his shins for haste, but deliberately make *a hundred years* at least between *every step*

The same prudence which this politick Pope used in his advance towards *a Reformation*, our *wary Enquirer* uses in his approaches towards *the Causes of Separation.* Hitherto we have been entertained with certain *Romantick Imaginary Causes*, and now he will give us a gentile Treat with *the Real ones.*

But of *these*, some are more *remote*, others *near hand*; these come by *the running Post*, those by *Tom Long* the Carriet. Thus your Poching Fellows, when they have found *the Hare sitting*, go round about, and about the Bush, till they have screwed themselves into a convenient Distance, and then give poor Puss Club Law, and knock her dead upon the Form.

1. Now the first of these Remote Causes is; *That it was the misfortune, and is the great disadvantage of this Church, that it was not well confirmed, and swadled in its Infancy, it conflicted with Serpents in its Cradle, and underwent a severe persecution.*

What he understands by that old Blind Heathenish Beldame *Fortune*, I cannot tell. The Scriptures have taught us to believe, That *the Hairs of our Head are all numbred*; and therefore much more *the Heads of the Martyrs*: That *a Sparrow falls not to the ground without the Providence of our Heavenly Father.* Much less *the Blood of the Saints*, which is *more precious* in his sight *than many Sparrows.* But this is only a *Shibboleth*, which serves for

a Certificate that he is no friend to *the immutable Counsels of God.*

However *this early persecution* must needs have a considerable influence upon the Churches present weakness; for thus *Mephibosheths Nurse*, making more haste than good speed, in her fright and flight threw down *her Nursery*, and he became lame to his dying day.

It was therefore politickly done of *Licurgus* (thinks the *Enquirer*) *when he had framed the Body of the* Spartan *Laws, to pretend an occasion to Travel; and having first taken an Oath of the People, that they should make no alteration* in that Government (either in Church or State) *till his return, he resolvedly never returns again.*

If the old Masters of Ceremonies could have perswaded the people to some such subscription, that they would never alter their Inventions till their return, and then had sentenced themselves to a voluntary perpetual Exile, it had been a successful piece of self denial to cheat a Nation into Uniformity, no less honourable to themselves than grateful to thousands.

But thus the Case stood with the Church in its Infancy. *King* Edward VI. *dying Immaturely*, (*too soon* says the *Enquirer*, *too late* says Dr. *Heylin*) Q. Mary *succeeded him in the Throne*, and so the Church was *put upon difficulties and trials, before its Limbs and Joints were settled and confirmed.*

Persecution has hitherto been esteemed one of the Churches *best friends*, whereof it has been *often afraid*, but *never hurt*: Such was the constant experience of the Primitive Christians: *Exquisitior quaque, crudelitas illecebra magis est sectæ, plures efficimur quotiès metimur, sanguis Martyrum est semen Ecclesiæ. The cruelties of Enemies does but more encrease the Number; the oftner the Church is mowed down, the thicker it comes up, and there's no Seed thrives so well as that which is steeped in the Blood of Martyrs.* That which Christians lose by *the wind of persecution*, is only *their Chaff*; that which *the fire of Tribulation* preys upon, is only *their Dross.* The *Marian* Fiers did the Church this one good turn, that it melted down much of that *imposing Spirit and Lordly Temper*, which reigned in some Church-men over their dissenting Brethren, which Bishop *Ridley* confessed at the Stake: That Tree which is of *Gods Planting*, takes deeper Root by shaking, and if it loses any *Ceremonious Leaves*, let them go, the Tree will bear *better and sweeter Fruit* without them.

Could Persecutors have seen *how much good* the Wise God would extract out of their evil, they would never have aggravated *their own damnation*, to be the instruments of the Christians *Salvation*: But malice is so quicksighted to do mischief, that it's Blind in the reasons of doing it; and makes such hast to her end, that she stumbles in the means; Thus *Nero*'s fingers itcht to be burning of *Rome*; but that he knew it would arise a more glorious *Phœnix* out of its *own Ashes*; which could the Devil himself consider, he would never be content *Tribules metere*,

dum

dam nobis ſpinas ſerit, to *ſow us Thorns, and reap himſelf a crop of Thiſtles.*

All this while we are waiting to ſee how he will make it out, that *This early Perſecution* did any *real hurt* to our *Infant Church*? And after ſome Preambles and Introductions, he will doubtleſs come home to the point: And firſt, *By reaſon of this Perſecution* (you muſt underſtand) *a great number of the Miniſters, and other Members of this Church, were driven into other Countries for refuge, and ſhelter from the Storm*, I hope their finding refuge, and ſhelter was no part of their miſery: but is was ſeaſonably remembred; for if the Miniſters, and other Confeſſors of this Church, found ſuch Cordial Entertainment amongſt the Reformed Churches beyond the Sea, if ever the like ſad providence ſhould ſend them hither, they may expect to meet with proportionable welcome. and not be remitted with their Beards half ſhaved, and their Coats dock't, with a Paper pinned at their Backs, intimating that they are Fugitives, Schiſmaticks, and Rebels.

But ſtill, *Quid hoc ad Iphicli Boves?* what is all this to the matter? oh now it comes! *There they were tempted with Novelty, and diſtracted with variety of Cuſtoms and Rites, before they were well inſtructed in the reaſons, or habituated in the practiſe of their own. And hereupon they brought home with them forreign faſhions*: The meaning is this, Reader! Religion travailed too young and raw, and drunk in the Ceremonies of the Reformed Churches, and ſhe cannot be diſ-infected to this day: A little matter will blow this duſt out of the Readers Eyes, and let him ſee the egregious trifling of this Harangue.

§ 1. He ſuppoſes that thoſe exiled Confeſſors. did but chop, or Barter one Ceremony for another; as ſuppoſe they carried out with them *The Croſs*, they exchanged it for *Cream*, or if they went out in *the Surplice*, they returned home in *the Friers Coule*: As if the Competition had been between *two Ceremonies*, which as Candidates vyed, which ſhould be moſt for Edification, and the Adorning Religion: whereas, they who improved their afflicted ſtate to the beſt advantage, left their Ceremonies behind them, and brought no other home in their rooms: Alas! to what end ſhould they bring more to *England*? this had been *to carry Coals to* New-Caſtle; or to what end ſteal from the Reformed Churches? which had been meerly *to rob the Spittle*.

§ 2. Thoſe Holy Men made not the forreign Churches *the Rule or Reaſon* of their Reformation in Worſhip; but *their help*, to lead them to *the Common Rule* of Reformation; They that were reduced to *Primitive poverty*, might be allowed to emulate *Primitive purity*. It was no wanton humour, but a ſence of Duty, begotten by awaken'd Conſcience, rouz'd up by their affliction, which brought them to a ſelf-denying compliance with the Inſtitutions of Chriſt: It would break the proud heart of them that live in Eaſe and Triumph, to *imitate their patience and reſolution*, whoſe *return to Goſpel-ſimplicity*, they can ſo pleaſantly deride.

§ 3. Its

§ 3. Its a ſcandalous reproach which he throws upon the Engliſh Reformation, as if it lay *in Rites and Ceremonies*, and ſuch kind of inventions. *Before* (ſays he) *they were well inured to the Engliſh Reformation, they became enamoured of the Rites of other Churches*: The Reformation lay not in *preſerving* Rites and Ceremonies, but in *purging* them away: ſo far *purged*, ſo far *reformed*; you may call *the Scar upon the Face*, it's *Healing*, if you pleaſe: but I will rather chuſe to call it, *a foot-ſtep, or reliqué of the old former wound*: nor will I call *the duſt behind the door* part of *the Houſes cleanlineſs*, and yet I dare not impoſe, let others call them as they pleaſe: this is evident, That thoſe things wherein the Reformation conſiſted, were oppoſed by the Papiſts, but the Ceremonies were not oppoſed by the Papiſts, therefore our Reformation conſiſted not in Ceremonies.

§ 4. No leſs is the reproach caſt upon thoſe famous Exiles, that they were *enamoured of the Rites of other Churches*; we read indeed 2 *Kings* 16. 10. 11. That King *Ahaz* in his Journey to *Damaſcus*, *ſaw an Altar* there, which pleaſed his Humour, and *he ſent to* Urijah *the Prieſt*, *the faſhion of the Altar*, *and the pattern of it*, *according to all the workmanſhip of it*, and he like a tractable good-natur'd man, that would not offend the King for a ſmall matter, *built an Alter according to all that King* Ahaz *had ſent from* Damaſcus: but our baniſhed worthies imitated not the Example, it was not the oppoſing one Ceremony to another, but the oppoſition of all Ceremonies which was their Glory.

But our *Enquirer* is reſolved they ſhall be in an Errour, and which looks ſomething like Charity, he will convince them of it too.

1. Their firſt weakneſs was, That *they conſidered not whether thoſe other Rites were better, ſo long as they were newer and freſher.* A groundleſs charge! new or old, freſh or ſtale, was nothing to them, it was Ceremonies as ſuch which they rejected; And if he can evince, that the preſent Diſſenters have derived from the Tranſmarine Churches any Rite or Ceremony, which is not of Divine Inſtitution, they are not ſo enamoured of it, but they will preſently deliver it up into his hands, to be dealt with at diſcretion.

2 Another failing was, that they obſerved not, *That there are oftentimes reaſons to make one form neceſſary in one place or people, and not in another, when its poſſible they may be both indifferent.*

They *obſerved* without his information, that the circumſtances of time and place in general, were indifferent; but they obſerved not, that new invented Rites were neceſſary in any time or place, to preſent the grace and duty of the Goſpel; They knew well, that all Chriſts Ordinances were *Decently to be Adminiſtred*; and they knew as well that there was no need to inſtitute *New Rites or Ceremonies* to create a decency, to conciliate a reſpect or reverence to any of Chriſts Ordinances: If we muſt have *New Rites*, to render *Chriſts Ceremonies* decent *and comely*,

then

then we muſt have *New Rites alſo* invented to render thoſe *Humane Ceremonies decent and comely*; and ſo infinitely forwards, others to make *thoſe latter decent and comely*, becauſe we cannot imagine the wiſeſt man on Earth able to contrive *a more perfect Ceremony* then Chriſt has done: And thus we muſt have *a Lace* to make the Garment *decent*, and then an *Edging* to make the *Lace decent*; and then we ſhall make Religion *a Suit*, as fantaſtick as *that Princes*, who fitted it with *Loop-holes*, like *Argus* his Eyes, and then hung *a Needle* at every Loop-hole to make all *decent*.

I have heard of a Taylour (from *France* no doubt) that was ſent for to take meaſure of, and make a Corde robe for the Moon; ſhe was then very ſlender, as being in Conjunction with the Sun, and when at the Fortnights end he brought her home her Gown, ſhe was grown ſo Corpulent, that it would not meet by a Third part of her Circumference; The poor man was ſadly aſhamed, blamed his Spectacles, and with more Circumſpection, takes meaſure of her Ladyſhip, and when he came *to try her Stayes*, ſhe was grown ſo ſlender, that ſhe looked like a ſhrimp in a Lobſters Symarr: Now the Moon is the Church, which according to the meaſures which our modiſh Faſhion-mongers take of her, muſt at *every Change and Full*, appear in new Accoutrements: And as Nations have differing Attires each from other, and *the Winters-freeze* differs from *the Summers-ſtuff*; ſo the ſame Church muſt have a *Mourning Worſhip*, and *a Wedding Worſhip*, accommodated to her outward acceſſions or declenſions in Wealth and Riches.

The *external Condition* of the Church does vary, but *her God* is the ſame; her *joy may be turned into ſorrow*, her *ſorrow into joy*; ſhe has her *faſting*, as well as her *feaſting* days; ſolemn Humiliations, and ſolemn Thankſgivings, but *her Worſhip* continues ſtill *the ſame*; Though the *Worſhippers* may alter their garbe, yet the Worſhip which reſpects the *immutable God*, is *immutable* like himſelf: If *new things* pleaſed our God, it were our duty to ſtudy *new things*. If he ſhall declare for *Summer Ceremonies*, and *Winter Ceremonies*, we muſt provide accordingly; but if with him there be *no variableneſs nor ſhadow of turning*, that Worſhip and Service which we offer to him, ought to obſerve the ſame fixedneſs and ſtability.

3. Another of their follies was, that they could not hit upon *the right rule of Reformation*. It was *their unhappineſs*, that this *Enquirer* was not then born to direct them to it; which advantage the preſent Age may enjoy, if we be not wanting to our ſelves; And it is this: *That thoſe differing forms be fitted to the Humour and Cuſtom of the People, and made conſonant to the civil Conſtitutions*: A *Rule* had need be *ſtraight*, or elſe whatever is framed by it will be *crooked*: Now 1. For *the Humour of the People*: This has ſometimes the *ſad fate* to be decryed as *the cauſe of Deformation*, and now *the happineſs* again to be as much cryed up for *the rule of Reformation*; which if it be varied according to the ebbing and flowing of this *Euripus*, muſt needs be changed half a ſcore

a score times in four and twenty hours. 2. *Custom* has I confess a *fairer plea*, some persons of no small Learning, pretending it to be *the only rule of decency in things indifferent*. In p. 31. *our Enquirer* intimates, *That the Constitutions* (of a Church) *by Time are digested into Customs, and made natural*. Now if Custom be *the only rule of decency*, then *the Churches Constitutions* ought to be of no things but what are *naturalized to a People by Custom*, and thereby made decent, unless he has a power also *to command All things to be done undecently*, and then leave to be *made comely by long usage*, and continued Custom; but if the *Churches Constitutions*, her power to *impose and judge what is decent*, be *the Rule of Decency*, and *the Reason of our Obedience*, then Custom is not *the only Rule of Decency*.

How much better were it, that the peoples *fluctuating Humours, odd Customs*, and *the Churches Constitutions*, were all regulated by *the Word of God*; which is equal, infallible, and impartial: *Equal*, and therefore we shall not be to seek for our Worship upon every accident; *infallible*, and therefore we may safely confide in its direction; and *impartial*, and so abets no party, favours no faction or worldly interest, but faithfully and fully delivers out to us the mind and will of God: Whereas our *Enquirers* rule, must prove the Author of all mis-rule and confusion amongst the Churches of Christ, when *Humours* shall cross *Customs*, Customs thwart Humours, and perhaps *Civil Constitutions* shall retrench both *Customs and Humours*.

One instance will a little enlighten us in his design and meaning. *Where* (says he) *the Reformation had not at the first the Countenance of the Civil Government there the Reformers were constrained to enter into particular confederations with one another, from whence Presbyterian Government seems to have taken its rise*. Say you so? then I know who will assume; But for the first three hundred years after Christ all along through the purest Primitive times, the Christian Reformation had not *the Countenance of the Civil Government*, and therefore they *enter'd into particular Confederations*; from *whence the Presbyterian Government had its rise*. I cannot certainly tell, and therefore dare not conjecture, whether these *particular confederations*, be not a kind of *New Latine*, for *the solemn League and Covenant*; but this I will say, That the thanks of the *Classis* are ordered to be returned to this Gentleman for his Learned Argument to prove, *the Presbyterian to have been the Primitive Church-Government*.

All this while it remains a great mystery, *how these poor Exiles prejudiced the English Reformation*; And therefore in the first place he will give us some light into it by a plain and familiar illustration. *As the Children of* Israel, *even when they had Bread from Heaven, Angels Food, longed for the Onions and Garlick of* Ægypt, *remembring how sweet they were to them, under their bitter Bondage; so these Men retained as long as they lived a lingring after those entertainments which they found then very pleasant, when the other was denied them*. The foundation of this ingenious illu-

illuſtration lies in theſe Two Things. Firſt, That the Rites and Ceremonies of *England* were *Manna*, *Bread from Heaven*, *Angels Food*: And Secondly, That the Worſhip of the Reformed Churches without theſe Ceremonies were *Onions and Garlick*, he muſt have an Oſtrich-Stomack that could concoct them, unleſs they were firſt macerated, and diſſolved in a Menſtruum of Ceremonies: Now the parallel is ſo ſelf-evident, that we ſhall only need to gather what drops of it ſelf, and not to ſhake the Tree: For 1. As the Manna was of Gods own appointment, ſo we muſt not queſtion but the Ceremonies alſo were. 2. The Manna was *Angels Food*, and as whenever Angels will cloath themſelves with *a Garment*, they cannot aſſume one of more Congruity than *Light*; ſo whenever they ſhall pleaſe to condeſcend *to a Treat* from Men, they cannot be ſerved up with *a more agreeable Diſh* than Ceremonies; And then 3. As the Manna was deſpiſed, and accounted *dry Meat*, ſo are theſe Ceremonies too; and therefore as wiſe Fathers take away their Childrens Meat, if they will not eat their Bread; ſo the Fathers of the Church think it wiſdom to deny their Children Spiritual Food, if they will not down with the Ceremonies, or let them faſt till they have a better Stomack: But the parallel comes off very lamely at laſt: For the Manna laſted only whilſt the Church was *in the Wilderneſs*, and *ceaſed* as ſoon as they entered *the Land of Canaan*; whereas the poor afflicted and perſecuted Churches knew none of thoſe Rites, but ſurfeited of them in the day of her Reſt and Proſperity: And therefore to have carried on the Humour, he might have feigned one thing more as well as all the reſt; That thoſe Exiled Worthies lived all the fourty years of their Baniſhment upon nothing but Rites and Ceremonies, but when they came to the Land of Promiſe, *the Manna ceaſed*.

We have heard a long narrative of the cauſe of Non-conformity from the Exiles in Queen *Maries* days; which had it been delivered without colour or fraud, had amounted to no more than this naked little, when the Righteous God ſaw it neceſſary to unchain the Devil, and let him looſe upon the *Engliſh* Proteſtants to exerciſe their Graces, and correct their Follies; he gave ſome of them *Chriſtian Courage* to abide by the tryals; to others of them *Chriſtian Wiſdom* to *ſecure themſelves by flight*: Had *all fled*, the Truth had wanted *Witneſſes at home* for *the preſent*; had *all ſtay'd*, the Truth had wanted *Succeſſors* for *the future*; they that fled, found the *Care of God* attending them, and *the Mercy of God* as a Harbinger going before them, to provide them firſt *a Room in the Hearts*, and then *in the Houſes of their Brethren*: Where being emancipated from the prejudices of *Inveterate Cuſtoms*, got from under *the Dureſſe* of *Impoſing Power*; humbled by afflictions, and made more willing to bear *the Yoke of Chriſt*, and finding the Reforming Churches a tolerable *Counterpane* of the New Teſtament Worſhip, many of them *not conſulting with Fleſh and Blood*, came off from Ceremonies, content

to

to Worship God with the same Measure of Decency prescribed, and practised by Christ and his Apostles.

When therefore he tells us, that those Exiles *received a Tincture of those other Rites before they had well imbibed, or sufficiently understood the Reasons of the Church of* England. He says no more than that *the Rationale of the Liturgie*, and the *Compassionate Enquiry*, were not then written; for where else to find *the Reasons of the Church*, for imposing Ceremonies, I am yet to seek.

2. A second Cause of this evil effect is: *The bad and incompetent provision made for a learned and able Ministry in the Corporations, and generality of the great Parishes in* England.

But before *this Incompetency* can possibly *be remedied*, it must be known what is *a Competency* for a Learned Minister, for some that are *Learned* enough, are also *Able* to spend five times more than the people are worth, or can spare.

Two things are here considerable, which have exercised *our Enquirers* politick Head-piece.

The Grievance, and the Redress of the Grievance.

1. For the Grievance. *The multitude of Opinions that deform and trouble the Church, are generally hatch'd and nurs'ed in the Corporations and Market Towns. Nay not only the dissatisfaction with the Rites and Ceremonies, but the convulsions and confusions of the State took their Origin from the bad Humours of those greater Societies.* But how easily might all this mischief have been remedied, had he pursued *his own Primitive Rule of* Reformation, *viz.* Modelled *the Rites and Government of the Church to the Humours and Customs of the People.* But his meaning was; That Reformation should be accommodated *to the Humours of the Villages*, where the people mind nothing of Religion, (as he thinks) but *not of the Market Towns, where they are intent upon New Fashions*: But the Reader must look on these as the lesser sports of his Wit, and the dilations of a pregnant Fancy; for the true Reason of all the dissatisfaction about those Rites, has been the want of good ground for them in the Word of God, and the main cause of the troubles that have ensued thereupon, has been the unreasonable and unseasonable imposition of them upon the Consciences of Men.

But our *Enquirer* is otherwise minded, and he imputes these *Convulsions and Confusions.*

§ 1. *To the Fullness and Luxury of these great Towns.* Well! have a little patience till he can procure his Proclamation against Trade, and to shut up the Shops, and that will most effectually take down their Grease, and humble their haughty Stomacks, and they will grow tame and manageable: But then another difficulty will arise, how they should maintain a *Learned and able Ministry*, and allow him *such a Revenue* as he shall confess to be *a Competency*; but is not this inconvenience to be found in the Country Towns and Villages? No! They *are for the most part quiet, and peaceably comply with establish'd Orders*; for they are *tired with hard labour, and never trouble themselves nor others, but*

but apply themſelves to Till the ground, and earn their Bread with the ſweat of their Brows. Let them have liberty to be poor, and pay their Tithes, and they concern themſelves little in Religion, or the ſaving of their Souls; they go by the old Rule, *Si Mundus vult vadere ſicut vult, Mundus debet vadere ſicut vult*: Theſe Creatures indeed will make fit materials for Uniformity to work upon; you may put the Bridle in their Mouths, and clap the Saddle on their Backs, and ride them till they are broken winded and foundred, and they will neither wince nor complain; and yet there are ſome ſowr Lads and knotty pieces amongſt theſe too, that will not budge a foot, nor yield an Ace further than Conſcience informed from the Word of God ſhall command them.

§ 2. In theſe great Towns *they have leaſure to excogitate Novelties, and Spirit, and confidence to abet them; and here there is great concourſe of people, where Notions are more eaſily ſtarted, and Parties ſooner formed for the defence of them*: Where the dividing Notions have been moſt ſtarted, I cannot infallibly tell; but I am ſure the richeſt Corporations find themſelves ſomething elſe to do than *to excogitate Ceremonies*, or other Novelties; and whether Convocations have always ſat in the great Towns or little Villages, is eaſily determined.

§ 3. The miſery of all is; That in theſe great Towns where was *moſt need of the moſt liberal maintenance: ſo pittiful a Pittance is left to the Curate or Miniſter, that he can ſcarce afford himſelf Books to ſtudy, nor perhaps Bread to eat, without too ſervile a dependance upon the benevolence of his Richer Neighbours, by which means either his Spirit is broken with Adverſity, or the dignity of his Office obſcured, or he tempted to a ſordid connivance at, or complyance with their follies, and ſo like* Eſau *ſells his Birthright for a Meſs of Pottage.*

The bottom of the Grievance in plain terms is this: If the Clergy could but once procure a Revenue ſettled hard and faſt upon them to their minds, (which what it is, neither we, nor perhaps themſelves ever knew) had they but more Wealth to ſupport their Grandeur, out of the hard labour of the poor drudging Moyls, that tug hard night and day to get Bread, had they but *Midas* his Option, or *Fortunatus his wiſhing Cap*, that every thing they touch'd might be Gold; they would then make the Blew-aprons Lacquey it, and trot to the Courts by their Horſe ſides, and it does them good but to imagine how they would firk their lazy Hides, and curry the ſcabbed Humour of Non-conformity out of them: Thus much of the *Malady*; the *Remedy* follows.

2. The Remedy of this inſupportable Grievance in ſhort is this. That a Law be made, that all Corporations, Market Towns, and great Pariſhes, provide a Maintenance for the Vicars, *in proportion to* London; for *till ſome ſuch courſe be taken, it will be in vain to expect, that the Church of* England, *or the beſt Laws of Religion, ſhould either obtain juſt Veneration, or due Effect.*

So

So far am I from envying them their Honours, Revenues, and desired Affluences, that I could be content they had *the Nine parts*, and the poor *Tenth only* left to the Land-lord, as a *small quit-rent* in memory that *the whole* was once his own: But what security can we have, that *that also* will not be demanded in time to make up a *Competency*; for Trade is *too great*, Corporations *too rich*, every one has *too much*, only the Clergy have *just nothing* till they have got their Competency, which *is nothing less than the whole*.

This was the glorious design managed by the Council of *Trent*, when the Church was so unmeasurably rich, that it maintained abundance of Cardinals, every one carrying the Port and State of a King; so many Arch-bishops, Bishops, Priests, besides the infinite numbers and swarms of Religious Persons, all endowed with ample Revenues, and yet they made a *Begging Decree*; much would have more; *Cujus avaritia totus non sufficit Orbis. That all the Faithful should be exhorted to give largely to the Bishops and Priests to maintain their Dignities.* But the Parliament of *Paris*, a wise and foreseeing Assembly, abhorring this Mendicant Trade, and knowing well, that your counterfeit Beggers hide Luxury under the Covert of Rags, and remembring possibly that of *Solomon*, Prov. 13. 7. *There is that maketh himself poor, and yet there is no end of his Substance*; gave this censure of it.

That this had been good indeed, if they did serve the people as they ought, and were really in need; for so St. Paul *exhorts, That he that is instructed, should give some part of his goods to him that instructs him; but when he that bears the Name of a Pastor does intend any thing rather then to instruct the people, the Exhortation is not proper; and the rather because Ecclesiastical goods formerly were for maintaining the Poor, and Redeeming Slaves; for which Causes, not only the Immovables, but even the Ornaments of Churches, and Holy Vessels were Sold. In the Mosaical Law, God gave the Tenth to the Levites, who were but the 13th part of the people; but the Clergie now, who are not a Fiftieth part, have gotten already the Fourth part, and doth still proceed to gain, using many Artifices therein;* Moses *having invited the People to offer for the service of the Tabernacle, when as much was offer'd as did suffice, forbad them in the Name of God to offer any more; but here will be no end found till they have all, if Men will continue still in the Lethargie: If some Priests and Clergie-Men be poor, it's because others are excessively rich, and an equal distribution would make them all rich abundantly.* Hist. Trent. Counc. p. 821. Again Ib. p. 540. *For a Synod to put their hands into Mens Purses to maintain Curates, seemed strange, both for the matter and the manner; for the matter, because the Clergie was superfluously rich, and rather indebted to the Laity: For the manner, because neither Christ nor his Apostles did ever compel Men to make Contributions, but only gave power to receive them that were voluntary; And he that reads St.* Paul *to the* Corinthians *and* Galathians, *shall see the Masters treatment of the*

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Oxe that treadeth out the Corn; and the duty of the Catechiſted, towards him that Catechiſeth, yet ſo that thoſe Labourers have no Action by rigour of Law, *nor any* Chancery *to relieve them.*

It was a notable Conſtitution of the wiſe and potent Prince *Carolus M. conſtitut.* fol. 73. ,Ut decimæ Populi dividantur in , quatuor partes, id eſt, una pars Epiſcopo, Alia Clericis, ter- , tia pauperibus, quarta Eccleſiæ in fabricis applicetur, ut in , Decretis Gelaſii P. continetur: *That the Peoples Tythes ſhould be divided into four parts, one whereof ſhould maintain the Biſhops; a ſecond the Clergy-men, a third ſhould maintain the Poor, and a fourth ſhould go to the repair of Churches*: Now if the Church-Wardens and Overſeers of the Poor, ſhould have all their Levies raiſed out of their Tythes, which was the firſt and beſt uſe of them, what a peal of ſacriledge ſhould we have ringing about our Ears continually: Let me ſoberly propound a few Quæries.

1. Qu. Whether they who are for a moderation in Reformation, a mediocrity in coming up to the Primitive purity, ought not to be as real for a moderation and mediocrity in maintenance? It ſeems to be very diſproportionable to cry out for a Mean in Trading, a moderation in Preaching, moderation in Reforming, and yet to be immoderate for Revenues. A little I ſee will ſerve of any thing but riches. Let men have but enough of wages, and they can be content with little enough of work.

2. Whether it be rational to proceed in this matter *aſcendendo*, to bring up the lean Vicarages to *the Corpulency of fat Parſonages*, or *deſcendendo*, to reduce the *gouty Benefices* to the modicum of the *meagre Vicarages*, and not rather to make an Equality, that they may both meet in the half way?

3. When a Market Town or Corporation is low, and not able to maintain its poor, the Law enables the Juſtices of the Peace to bring the Neighbouring Village under Contribution; and they who underſtand what Charity is in a mean eſtate, are glad ſince there is ſo ſad occaſion to demonſtrate their Charity, to lay hold on it: Let it therefore be enquired, why the poor Corporation Vicars ought not to be augmented out of the richer Parſonages of the Neighbourhood? But many will cut a large Thong out of anothers Hide, who will be ſure to ſpare his own Skin; and they whoſe Tails ſweep the ground, will not lend an Inch to him that is docked cloſe by his Buttocks.

4. Whether the poor Vicar ought not rather to be relieved out of the rich Clergy-mans Excrements, then out of the life-blood of the Laity? If the Revenues of Pluraliſts and Prebends, with other ſuch uſeleſs Creatures, were annext to the ill provided places, all would be well; but the Daughters of the Horſe-leach cry ſtill, *give, give*, and yet they are ready to burſt with blood.

5. Whether it be not more agreeable to the Primitive times, and the nature of the Chriſtian Religion, that the Clergy ſhould have ſome dependance on the People as to Temporals, who do-

depend so moch on their Clergy in Spirituals? we consider the Inconveniencies of a depending Clergy, but not the greater ones of having them absolute and independent: who having got a settled Maintenance, defie their Benefactors, contemn those that drudge to maintain their splendid Equipage, and torment their Consciences, who keep the Woolf from their Doors: The middle way is therefore best, That so much be settled as is absolutely necessary, and leave them to stand upon their *good behaviour* for superfluities: since he that is rich, and able to contribute liberally this year, may become poor, and need Contribution the next; and its not equal to be compelled to Charity when he cannot discharge his Debts.

6. Whether it be not a most scandalous reflection upon the English Clergy, which he intimates p. 39. *That the motives and invitations of the most judicious Clergy, to undertake the work* (viz. the charge of the flock) *is from the most liberal maintenance?*

7. Whether the healing of the Clergies Poverty, will not cure them of their Laboriousness in Preaching? and whether doubling the Revenues will not single the Sermons? I have read of a poor Vicar, that being taken notice of by the Bishop for an industrious Preacher, to encourage him in his work, he gave him a good bulkie Parsonage; but observing that he began presently to slacken his pace, and come to *once a day*, he sends for him, expostulates the Case with him, why he should *work less* now he had *more Wages*, to whom he answered ingenuously, *Parva loquuntur Curæ, ingentes stupent.*

8. Whether it was advisedly spoken by our *Enquirer*, to compare a Ministers Condescension to his scrupulous people in the matter of Ceremonies to *Esau's selling his Birth-right for a Mess of Pottage?* for if the Minister should happen to cut short his *Common Service* to gratifie his Patron in hopes of *a Dinner*, the worst he can make of it is, that he sells *a Mess of Pottage* for *a Sunday-Pudding*. And if a Ministers Birth-right *consist in Rites and Ceremonies*, he that gives *a Mess of Pottage for it*, will certainly buy it too dear.

3. The third cause is the late Wars: And for proof hereof he will *desire the Reader to look no further back, then the late Wars between this Kingdom, and the States of the Low-Countries.* But why *no further* back? we used to be *lead back as far as the late Civil Wars*; but our *Enquirer* was better advised then his Reader perhaps is aware of: It had not been safe to follow truth too near the Heels, least it should have dasht out his Teeth.

But into what a perplexed Dilemma has he brought the Church of *England*? If we have Peace with *Holland*; and therewith Trade and Commerce, then comes in all the *new fangled Commodities*, Ceremonies and Rites *of forreign growth*, exotick *Customs*, jack-in-a-boxes; If we have War with them, then *the Reins of Government are remiss*, and *Non-conformity grows apace*: *for that* (says he) *the Contempt of Religion is greater, and the state of the Church worse at the end, then the beginning of those Wars:*

Wars: Could we but underſtand the myſtery that lurks under that word *Religion*, and that *Jargon and Cypher* [*the ſtate of the Church*] we might eaſily return an Anſwer. By *Religion* then underſtand *Ceremony*, by *the ſtate of the Church*, underſtand, its *power to cruſh, and ruine all that comply not with thoſe Ceremonies*, and then it's very true, that *Wars are a great Enemy to Religion*: Every thing is ſo far to be *reputed evil* as *it croſſes*, and *ſo far good* as it advances *the Trade of Ceremonies and Impoſitions*: If Navigation and Merchandiſe be Eſſential to the flouriſhing ſtate of the Nation, yet if they ſtand in the way of Ceremonies, damn them as *Schiſmatical*; and Wars and Blood-ſhed, and the beggering of the Nation, if they would but promote Ceremonies, were amongſt the choiceſt deſirables: However the remedy is cheap and eaſie: 'Tis but parting with *the Flag, the Soveraignty of the Sea*, (which our Enemies would have perſwaded us were but *a Ceremony*) *the fiſhery*, the *Eaſt-India Trade*, and perhaps two or three more ſuch *inconſiderable neceſſaries*, and we might have ſecured our Innocent Ceremonies, and the Churchmen ſwagger'd over the Conſciences of Diſſenters.

He that has a mind to interpoſe in a diſcourſe of Wars, may poſſibly get a broken Pate for his pains; otherwiſe the Valour of the Engliſh Nation, has ſo juſtified it ſelf in our Naval Engagements, that it needs not be aſhamed to look back upon its behaviour; but I ſhall only obſerve as I paſs on theſe few things.

1. That the Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtories obſerve to our hand, that the Wars between the Emperour and the *Perſians*, proved a means to check thoſe perſecutions which the *Arians* raiſed againſt the Orthodox: And if the great Governour of the World will *over-rule publick Calamities*, to render the condition of perſecuted Chriſtians tolerable, we have the more reaſon to admire his powerful wiſdom, who out of *ſo great an Evil* could extract *ſo great a Good*.

2. I muſt call to mind one of our *Enquirers* grave ſentences; *ubi ſolitudinem fecerunt, pacem vocant*: That which ſome men count *Peace*, is nothing but *havock and deſolation*. Like ſome great *Encloſers*, who having depopulated all about them, and left nothing but the bare Ribs, and naked Skeleton, of ſometimes flouriſhing Farms, bleſs themſelves that they are at peace from the noiſe of the obſtreperous Carters. Thus when our Eccleſiaſtical projectors, ſhall have ruined Trade, routed the Conſcientious, and forced peaceable Diſſenters into deſerts; beggar'd Corporations, thoſe Neſts of Schiſm, they may applaud themſelves for profound States-men, that they have wrought out their own Eaſe, with the miſeries of the People.

3. Wars may reaſonably contribute ſomething to a juſt and well bounded Liberty of Conſcience, for how could a Prince expect his Subjects ſhould hazard their lives in his righteous cauſe and quarrel, and open their Purſes wide to maintain the War, when either they muſt loſe them in his Service, or if they return having ſurvived apparent dangers, be trampled upon at home,

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by those who have all the while sat still at ease, wrapt up in warm Furr, and security. There's no great difference *whether a man be slain by chain-shot, or a single Bullet*; And yet a generous Spirit would accept is as more Eligible to meet a noble death in the Field, fighting for his Prince and Countrey, then to languish and pine away an inglorious Life in servitude, under Ecclesiastical Impositions.

4. If the effects of War were lamented, as letting in Debauchery and Prophaneness, tolerating immoralities, antiquating the practice of Religion, we should *mourn with him that thus mourns*: But when we shall have an Oration of the Evils of the War, and at last, the great one is, that it makes people not so fond of Ceremonies, whereas Peace and Prosperity multiplies them, it's enough to make a people entertain thoughts less evil of the one, and less honourable of the other: for thus *the Spartans made the lives of the People so intolerable in Peace*, that they might more readily engage *in Wars abroad*. And indeed such mis-representations of the reasons of things, have made the World desire like *the Salamander*, War for its Element, that they might not dwell in *the hotter fire of Persecution* in a more moderate Climate called *Peace*; for *a Person of Honour* that in defence of his Country has come up to the *mouth of a Canon*, and come off with renown, to be slain by an *Ecclesiastical Canon*, would make him resent his fall with regret, and dying, bite the ground.

4. The fourth, and indeed the greatest cause of all these mischiefs, is a pestilent evil, known by the name of *Trade*: This Kingdom of Great *Britain* is an Island, which as by its situation it has the greatest need of, so the greatest advantage by Commerce. That which *Nature* made *a Necessity*; *Art and Industry* have turn'd into *a Virtue*: That as we cannot live *comfortably without it*, so we are capacitated to live *Gloriously by it*: To speak of its usefulness to English men, were to be as impertinently absurd, as that Soldier who would needs *Dare Militari coram Hannibale differere*, read a Lecture of Tactics, to one of the bravest Captains of his time for Courage and Conduct; and he may seem almost as vain that should commend it, as he would be impious that should disparage it.

But *Trade* be irreversibly doomed for an intolerable evil, may we ask with *Pilate*, pray *what evil has it done*, has it introduced the sins of the torrid *Zone*? or made those wickednesses Denizons, that were peculiar to hotter climates? has it impoverisht the Subject, or lessen'd the Revenues of the Crown? no! nothing of all these; but it has feloniously, and of its malice forethought, brought down the price of Ceremonies, which are the staple commodities of the Kingdom: But did not the dear Ceremonies come over by Shipping too? they are not drugs of our own growth, and therefore in Civility, we are obliged to carry a decent respect towards Navigation, that brought us home so rich a Cargo; but consider, shipping was useful till it

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has landed this fraught, and then like *Julius Cæsar*, burn them all, that they may never export so precious a Commodity.

In drawing up a charge against this Trade, our *Enquirer* looks like the very Picture of Modesty: He seems to say, *O utinam nescirem Literas*! He could almost wish (had it not been too great an injury to the world) that he had not been so Eloquent: *If he might do it with hout offence he would take the boldnest to say*; that is, If the Merchants would not be angry to have an Embargo laid upon their Ships, and their Goods seized. He would say something — Nay, pray Sir speak out; the Merchants will exercise so much self-denial sure for once as to be beggered. Why then this is the something he would say. *That the vast increase of Trade does usually reflect some inconveniences upon Ecclesiastical Affairs*: The most favourable Indictment surely that ever was drawn up against an evil of so pernicious consequence in all the world. 1. They are but *inconveniences*; and what *Commodity* is there but is attended by some small *inconveniences*? 2. They are but *some inconveniences* neither, as perhaps, that one of the wealthy ungovernable Fanaticks cannot be called to account in the Ecclesiastical Courts, because he is *extra quatuor Maria*, or so. 3. It's not *always* neither, though *usually* that these fatal effects follow it; for sometimes an Eclipse, or Quartile Aspect may be disappointed of its malignant influence, by the interposition of a more bening Planet. 4. Nor has Trade *a direct spleen* against the Church, it does but *reflect* its malevolent Beams; now you know that *Radius reflexus languet*. 5. Nor is Trade, *any Trade*, in it self considered, but the *increase*, and *the vast increase of Trade* that has all the guilt upon it; so that if we could perswade Merchants and Tradesmen, either not to Trade, or not to thrive of their Trades, it would prevent all this mischief, and I durst undertake to perswade one half of them at least to this latter, if that would reconcile them to him. 6. And these Inconveniences are but *to Ecclesiastical Affairs*. Religion will not be prejudiced, nor Holiness suffer I hope; but there are *some Affairs*, whatever they are, that some Ecclesiasticks are a brewing, will not work so well: In one word it's *all but Ceremonies*.

The *most Christian King* is all this while endeavouring to settle Factories and Plantations for Trade abroad, and to give it all possible encouragement at home. And indeed they say, he has a very wise Council about him; who verifie the old Proverb, That *the* French *are wiser than they seem*; and they tell him, that whatever Quarter he carries with these Church-men, who have ever private designs of their own distinct from the general interest of that Monarchy; yet Navigation and Trade must be encouraged, and let the Priests fume and fret, or whine, and put the finger in the Eye, all's one, he will settle commerce for all the idle chat of Kirk-statesmen: But to speak truth, I do not hear, that the Clergy there, whether Regular or Secular, have these dreadful apprehensions, That *the Rise of Trade* will be *the Fall*

of the Church; and perhaps the Reasons of things they differ. They have *Legions of* (*ceremonies*, and may well spare some tattered Companies; their Commons are stock'd *sans Number*, and if they were a little *stinted*, the rest would thrive the better; but should we lose *a Brace, or a Leash*, we were half undone; and yet I am confident, that Wise and Valiant Prince, would sell us a dozen of the best Ceremonies he has in his Empire, for one half of our Trade, and thank us into the bargain.

We should smile at the tenderness of the Gentleman that would throw himself, and hopes away, to satisfie the impotent longing of a Green-sickness Girl; and others would as much smile at us, should we sacrifice the Wealth and Strength of a Nation to the Humour of those, who for a few Ceremonies which apprized by indifferent persons, are not worth one of our Plantations, would loose both: But if the Trade of a Nation be of no more concernment then to be cast away for such trifles, all we shall gain by the hand, is *an Additional Reason* why they are called *Beggarly Rudiments*.

You are therefore satisfied that it was mannerly done to scrape a Leg to the Merchants before he would propound so harsh, and displeasing a business: He would do it *without offence, if he might be so bold! He envies no mans wealth; Its far from his thoughts to stop the Tide of Trade dammed up*; offended! I wonder who could find in his heart *to be offended* at such civility? such potent charms of Rhetorick are able to perswade them to Moor up their Ships for ever, rather then import any of those *Holland* prohibited Commodities.

Readers, you are now to give your Attendance to a most eloquent Oration, which is the Embalming of Trade, before it be converted to Mummy: for thus the Orator!

Trade is hugely advantageous to the publick as well as private persons, in many respects. It much raises the parts, and sharpens the Wits of a Nation by forreign Conversations; It opens a passage to the discovery of other Countries, and of the works of God and Man, of Art and Nature; Its the great Incentive, and Instrument of Humane Society. It makes all mankind of one Body, and by mutual intercourse to serve the occasions, supply the needs, and minister to the delight and entertainment one of another. It enlarges the minds of Men, as well as their fortunes, insomuch that any Nation is unpolite, unbred, and half barbarous without it; It inures men to hardship and danger, and instructs them in subtlety, and all the Arts of living and self-security, It adds much to the Beauty, Power, and Strength of a Nation, and to the Riches and Revenues of the Prince. — Dixi! — *And yet all this notwithstanding* — Ay! there's one evil in't which we little dream of, which out-weighs all those Conveniencies, *Inlargement of Trade hath usually been attended* (he *must crave leave to say* it) *with as much latitude of Conscience*: then some mens Consciences have above 70 degrees of *South and North Latitude*. *And the heat of that, with as much coldness and indifferency in Religion, It's commonly observed to introduce great diversity of*

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Opinions, and consequently to abate of Mens Zeal for, and Reverence of an uniformity in what was before eſtabliſhed. And therefore better the *publick were undone*, Mens *Parts and Wits* made as dull as a Beetle, *forreign Diſcoveries* left to the pragmatical *Dutch*, all *Commerce with other Worlds* interrupted, and the *Britains* once again excommunicated from the reſt of Mankind: Better a thouſand times Mens *Fortunes and Hearts* were broken, the *Glory of the Nation* ſtained, its *ſtrength* ſhattered, *the Exchequer* exhauſted; than *Uniformity in ſome little things* endangered, *one Ceremony* diſparaged, *the Wills of ſome Clergie-men* croſſed, which might ſhorten their days, or one pair of Organs put out of Tune, which would make them grumble like a pair of *Scotch* Bag-pipes.

And to ſpeak the truth, all *the great ends of Trade* might be ſecured *by Ceremonies*, and an exact uniformity in them; for it will wonderfully ſharpen Mens wits, and make them both *as keen and blew* as a Razer, to find out every day ſome happy new conceit: *Pope Vitalian* was the Man that Glories firſt to have taught Mankind the Art of Worſhipping God with *a Box of Whiſtles*. Society will be maintained by being *all of a piece* at home, and inſtead of *forreign diſcoveries*, an Inquiſition will better ſearch out the *Terra Incognita* of Conſcience, and let *this Enquirer* be one of *the Lords Inquiſitors of that Holy Houſe*; and *the ſtrength of* the Nation would be better ſecured, if the Train'd Bands were untaught all their old poſtures, *to the right and the left*, and knew nothing but *face about to the Eaſt*. The Beauty of the Nation will be ſo enhanced, that we ſhall ſhine with a painted face of Religion: And the old Controverſie between *Mare Liberum*, and *Mare Clauſum*, will be for ever determined, and that on *the right ſide*; which out of Zeal to the Honour of *the incomparable* Grotius, every devout perſon is bound to pray for; nor ſhall the Seas any more be prov'd of their Blood, which have fought to aſſert their Right to that Rolling Empire.

It was then ſeaſonably, and well thought on, to propound to us *the Wiſdom of the* Lacedemonians, *who that the Laws and Government might not be diſturbed with Novelty; abſolutely forbad Trade or Traffick, or ſo much as Travelling into other Countries, leſt the Citizens ſhould barter away their own Laws and Cuſtoms, for thoſe of other Cities.* But then I doubt *their Laws* were about *the great things* that concerned *the Nations being*. They did not make Laws, *That every Mans Hair ſhould be of a length*, and then ſwear the people to obſerve them, and *forbid Trade*, leſt they ſhould bring in the *Geneva Cut*, and deſtroy *Periwigs*: And beſides all this, they prohibited *Travel as well as Trade*; as good leave *all the doors* of a houſe open, *as one*, and ſtop *never a leak*, as *not all*, for *one* will ſink the Veſſel. Now how to reſtrain Travel deſerves more conſideration; and therefore let it be remembred, that *Trade and Travel* are *no otherwiſe evil*, than *in their miſchievous* conſequence; and could we ſeparate the grand inconveniences from them, they would not

be *Mortal*; seeing then we Trade more into *Holland*, and Travel more into *Italy*, simple Travel cannot be so destructive as compounded Trade.

These Arguments Cook'd up in good Language, may perswade all Men to step out of the way, and throw themselves over the Bridge in convenient season; for what can be impossible to these Arts? But he had told us *p.* 35. *That there are oftentimes Reasons that make one form necessary in one place and people, and not in another.* And therefore his Reasonings from *Sparta* will hardly go current in *England*: Some say *Sparta* was a free State, and therefore it may not hold in a Monarchy; and others say, these were *the fundimental Laws* of their *Magna Charta*, which they would secure by abridging Trade and Travel; and not some odd *Articuli Cleri*, what Garments their Priests should wear upon Holy-days.

But never was Man in such a distraction between his remaining pity to the distressed Merchants, and his yearning Bowels to the precious Ceremonies; so has *the Merchant himself* been distracted in an Aphoretick Debate between *his Lading*, and *his Life*, till at last *dear Life* overcame the stickle of combating Objections, and over board went all his Merchandise: Thus this *Compassionate Person* would not have *Trade die*, but yet he must have *Impositions live*; and where are those grave Headpieces that can reconcile these differing Interests? Why yet *he hopes that the* English *Reformation is such, that it may rather gain than lose Proselytes, by being confronted with any other Institutions*: And there is no question but under its present Advantages it would do so, did not the severity of Impositions, and rigorous exacting of things which *at best are but indifferent, at most* doubtful, and *to many* sinful, against which standing Caveats have been entred from the beginning of the Reformation, a little marre the sweet air of her truly beautious face, and thereby render her not altogether so surprizing.

But as the Case stands, from whence should we hope for this numerous Offspring of Proselytes? From amongst the Papists? Alas, they have conceived greater hopes of us: That *their Tyber* shall swallow up *our Thames*, before our *London* shall Proselyte their *Babylon*: And they are encouraged in their hopes, because they say our Ceremonies are a Bridge over the Narrow Seas, not *to let all the Women of* Europe *into* England as we fancy, but to admit *Rome* amongst us with all its Retinue of Pompous Nothings. From the Reformed Churches then? Alas, they are satisfied in their Primitive simplicity, they content themselves that *their Churches* are True Churches, their Ministers *Gospel Ministers*; and though they may perhaps make a Journey now and then *to learn* English *Preaching*, they think it not worth the while to fetch Fire: The Expedients propounded to reconcile Trade and Uniformity, are as follow.

1. That *there may be such Laws provided, and such care taken, that the one* (I suppose he means Trade) *be not discouraged, nor the*

the other (Diſcipline no doubt) *corrupted*. I have been ſtudying what further Acts of Uniformity this Gentleman would have enacted; whether with *the Grave Recorder* he would introduce the *Spaniſh Inquiſition*, or revive *the Act for Baniſhment*, or extend the Statute of *Præmunire* to every one that ſhall keek at a Ceremony; I hope God will pour out *the Spirit of Wiſdom and Underſtanding, of Counſel, and the fear of the Lord* upon our Legiſlators: we may *make Rods* to whip *our ſelves* upon *our Childrens backs*; and the Teeth of Poſterity may be ſet on edge with thoſe ſowr Grapes, which though the Fathers did not eat, yet they planted *the Vines* that bore them. But what would he have? Why *he would have a more ſimple way of Agriculture attended to, as it was amongſt the* Spartans, *and this Nation formerly*: Really if it had not been for *theſe Spartans*, I cannot tell what we ſhould have done: But it's always thus when Divines will be Stateſmen, and dictating to their Superiours: Scholars ſit up late at their Studies, till *the Cocks and their Brains begin to crow*, and what uncouth whimſeys breed in their Heads? There was once amongſt us an odd Generation of Folk, we call'd 'em *Adamites*, and they would level all things, reduce all things to the mode of Paradiſe; ſuch another Capricio is our *Enquirer*, who though he will not reduce Religious Affairs as high as the Apoſtle, yet Trade muſt be carried higher, and new modeled *Secundum uſum* Spartæ. I am a thinking what we ſhould do with our Wool, which was once the ſtaple commodity of the Nation till the Ceremonies carried it; when we have ſpun it, woven it, and worn as much as we need, what muſt we do with the reſt? I ſhould never have gueſſed, but that there's *an Old Stuff* ſet off with *a New Name*, they call it *Epiſcopacy revived*, and that muſt employ the remainder.

I have heard of a ſupercilious *Spaniſh Don*, who being ask'd by his Friend, *How the* Engliſh men *lived?* Anſwered, *Oh they live by ſelling Ale to one another*. The Anſwer was unpardonably ſcandalous, yet agreeable to the Moroſe Humour of that people: But to this very paſs muſt we come, when the deſign againſt Trade takes, to Barter Food for Raiment; and both for *Ceremonies*.

2. His next expedient is; *That every one have ſo much Charity towards the Governours of his own Country, and their Church, as to think them both as wiſe and honeſt as in other places*. And let me add: *A great deal honeſter and wiſer too*. We hope our Governours are ſo wiſe, and tender of their Subjects, as to allow them their Conſciences, the only thing God has reſerved to himſelf, and that they are ambitious to preſerve intire for him; which will ſweeten all that coſt and pains they are at in the Service of him, whom *Divine Grace* has ſet over them: But the higheſt opinion we can poſſibly entertain of the Wiſdom and Sincere Piety of our Governours, may well conſiſt with a Humble Petition, to be excuſed in that *one thing* the Immediate Worſhip of God.

As it does not imply that I am *wiſer or better* then every man

whose Religion I cannot own in every particular, so neither does it suppose that I *entertain low thoughts* of the Legislators Wisdom, because I cannot subscribe to his Tendries, whilst I patiently submit to his penalties, for it must needs be supposed that I judge him vested with Authority from God to govern me, and *wise* in annexing a Sanction to his Law so equal, that I may submit to it, whose preceptive part I cannot discern so to be.

I have heard some plead in justification of the Severities inflicted on the Jesuites in *Q. Elizabeth* and *K. James* his Reign, that they suffered not for Religion, but disturbing the Government, we humbly beg the same favour; Let not our Worship be accounted a Breach of the Peace, *ipso facto*, but if the matter be disloyal, or the Consequences turbulent and tumultuous, we have no farther to plead in our own behalf.

3. A third expedient is, *That we impute not all the distractions of mens minds, and the quarrels against the Church, to the badness of its Constitution, since this point of Trade hath such an influence, as we see both in the nature of the thing, and in the effects of it.* I have no power to compound for *the Trading part*, and presume he has as little to treat on the behalf of *the other part*. *The blame* of our Distractions, Divisions and Quarrels, will lie *where they ought*, let him or I lay them where we please; If Trade brings in *multitudes of Opinions*, yet that those Opinions *make quarrels*, is because perhaps one needless Opinion is made *Cock of the Dung-hill*, and Crows over all the rest *its equals*, and may be *its betters*. I think impartially there's *blame on all hands*, and if we could wave that sorry way *of excusing our selves*, by *accusing others*, we were certainly in a fair way of Healing: yet one point he has left unproved to the Charity of his well-disposed Reader, *viz.* That *Trade in its own Nature* has such *an influence upon our Distractions*.

4. His last remote Cause is from *the Papists and Athiests, who both, though upon several grounds combine their malice against the Church*

1. And first for the Papists: concerning whom he will treat of two things: first, why they are such Enemies to our Church; and then wherein the Enmity discovers it self.

§ 1. What is the reason that these Papists should be such implacable Enemies to this Church? did we ever go about to Blow up the Pope and his Consistory with Gun-powder? or ever Massacre a Hundred Thousand of his Catholicks in *Ireland*? Oh no! It was a higher, or a deeper cause, no matter which, whilst our *Enquirers* penetrating Head can reach it.

1. *The decent order of our Church shames their Pageantry*: *Rome* has *a Brazen-face* of her own; and I assure this Gentleman for all his Confidence, it's *not a little* matter will fetch *the blood into her Cheeks*. She has *cause enough* to blush, but she wants *a Fore-head*; though the blood of Thousands of Protestants lies *upon her Conscience*, yet it appears not *in her Looks*:

But

But before our *Enquirer* upbraid them with *their Pageantry*, it will be neceſſary that he gives us the Nice critical difference between *Ceremonies Decency and Pageantry*; for if the definitions of both be not fixed to a hairs breadth, either the Papiſts will prove *their Theatrical pomp* to be *Decency*, or *our Ceremonies* to be *Pageantry*; If *all myſtical Rites* be *Decent*, they will ſhew us *Twenty for One*; and will hardly be *made to bluſh* for *their penury*; or to envy our greater *plenty*: But if they ſhould be found *a piece of Pageantry*, they have *infinitely out-done us*, but withall, its *no great* commendation to have *but little Pageantry* in Gods Service.

2. *The Dignity of the Church ſhames theirs*: *Dignity* is a *Term of Art*, and capable of ſeveral meanings: If by Dignity we ſhould (as we ought) to underſtand, *A real eſſential worthineſs*, ariſing from ſomething excellent in the account of God; then *this Church* has ſo out-ſtript *her*, that ſhe ought not to be named in the ſame day and year. But if we ſpeak with the Vulgar, and take this *Dignity* for *ſome external glory ſhining out in ſecular Luſtre*, which is that currant ſignification, which *Cuſtom*, the *Maſter of the Mint*, has ſtampt upon it, I doubt ſhe will *hold up her Head*, and not be *daſht out of Countenance*; ſhe can produce her *purpurates patres*, her Cardinals, (Princes fellows) her Dignitaries, ſhe can produce you her Acolytes, dancing attendance upon her Deans; her Deacons footing it after her Prieſts, her inferiour Clergy boſing before her *mitred Prelates*; and all theſe orderly Reverencing their Metropolitan, but then ſhe boaſts unmeaſurably, that ſhe has an Eccleſiaſtical Head to be the Center of Union to all thoſe; ſo that whether you run up the ſcale from the poor *Oſtiary* to *the Exoreiſt*, and ſo upwards, or down the Scale from the ſupream infallible Noddle, moving all the inferiour Wyers, ſhe will brazen it out, and never hang down her Head.

3. *The Antient Gravity of our Church reproves* theirs: I am ſorry for the Honour of our Church, which I truly Reverence, that this Gentleman in vying with *Rome*, ſhould pitch upon thoſe particulars, wherein if we *do excel*, and carry the day, it will be no ſuch Victory as to challenge *a Triumph*; and yet ſuch is the dubiouſneſs of the caſe, that perhaps we may loſe the day: I do not yet hear that *Rome* has diſclaimed Antiquity to be one of *the marks of the true Church*: and know ſomething of her preſumption in applying it to her ſelf: Let any Antiquity ſhort of Scripture Epocha, be fixt upon, and ſhe will make a ſorry ſhift to ſcramble through many a tireſome Century, and ſcuffle to come as near the Apoſtolical days as ſome others: Both ſides I think have play'd at the game of *Drop-father*, ſo long till they are weary, and forced to confeſs, that ſome things *now in uſage*, were *unknown to the Fathers*, and many things practiſed *by the Fathers*, which we have ſilently ſuffered to grow obſolete by deſuetude.

I look upon theſe things as matters of courſe and form, to look

look big, and ſet the beſt foot before: for if ever we confute *Rome* with an *Army of hard words*, *Decency*, *Order*, *Antiquity*, *Gravity*, they muſt be ſuch as *the Word of God* has made ſo. It muſt be a *Decency* warranted by God himſelf, either from *the Light of Nature*, or *Scripture*; *an Order* of Chriſts Eſtabliſhment; a *Gravity* exemplified from the Apoſtles; and *an Antiquity* which was *from the Beginning*; and when *Scripture* is once made ſole Umpire in the Quarrel. As the Church of *England* will certainly run the Papiſt *out of all diſtance*, ſo the Non-conformiſt will begin to put in his ſtake, and perhaps *win the Plate*.

§ 2. If you ask how the Church of *Rome* undermines *our Church*, he anſwers,

1. *She furniſhes other parties with Arguments againſt it.* It were much eaſier to evince, that the *Enquirer* has rather borrowed his Arguments from *Rome*, then *Rome* lent one to the Non-conformiſts: I think there's not one Arrow he can ſhoot againſt them, but I can ſhew him where 't was borrow'd, or ſhotten from a Jeſuites Quiver: where was that Argument taken from Axes, Halters, Pillories, Galleys, Priſons, Confiſcations, as ſome expreſs it, or as he more conciſely, *Executing the Laws*, borrow'd, but from *Rome*? The Scripture knows it not, the better ſort of Heathens abhorr'd it, Proteſtants diſown it, Papiſts only glory in it.

Utere jure tuo Cæſar, *ſectamque* Lutheri,
Enſe, Rotâ, Ponto, Funibus, igne Neca.

And whence was that argument for Active unlimited Obedience to all things commanded by the Church, borrowed; for though it becomes no mouth ſo well as his that can boaſt of *Infallibility*, yet ſtill we are preſſed with the ſame Argument, and in the laſt reſort *Publick Conſcience* muſt carry it. I am ſorry this imprudent perſon ſhould give any one occaſion *to ſay further*, that ſome of us at home, have furniſht *Rome* with Arguments againſt the Reformation, Arguments from the Scripture, *Rome* has none; from the nature of the thing, not one; but ſome have put into their Hands a left-handed Dagger, which does miſchief enough, it's called *Argumentum ad Hominem*. Thus when we are earneſt with them to throw away their *Oil and Cream*; they bid us, throw away *our Croſs*; If we deſire her to reform *her Cowles and Copes*, ſhe calls to us to reform *our Surplice*. When we in a friendly way caution them not to feed upon *the Devils fleſh*, they anſwer, As good eat *his fleſh* as *the Broth he was boiled in*.

2. *She is all for blind Obedience at home; but preaches up tenderneſs of Conſcience abroad.* And what the difference is between *blind Obedience*, and Obedience meerly *on the account of the Command*, I would willingly learn: And if any can ſhew us a better reaſon for the things commanded and enjoyned then that, we ſhall return him thanks.

If I might now borrow the *Enquirers* place ſo long as whilſt I pro-

propounded a few *Enquiries*, I would immediately resign to him his Province.

§ 1. If the enmity between the two Churches be so great as is pretended, what was the reason that so many Stars of the first magnitude in this Orb, were *in Conjunction with the Dragons Tail?* why were they so ready to yield him his *Western Patriarchate*, and all within the *first four hundred years?* which will at once bring *England* under his Subjection: though I much question whether the *Grand Seignior* will have so much good nature as to resign him *the Eastern Patriarchate* so easily.

§ 2. If the Church of *Rome* be this Churches *Enemy*, is she not then concerned to get more Churches to be her *Friends?* It's a wild Humour of some Church-men, that they will disoblige all the world, provoking every ones hand against themselves, whilst their hand is against every one; If *Rome* be an Enemy, she is a potent, malicious, subtle, and United Enemy, and it concerns a Church not to be *divided at home*, when her Enemies are *united abroad*: and to combine with the forreign Protestants in Love, were an excellent way to prevent the Combinations of *Romes* hatred.

§ 3. It would be enquired, If *Rome* be such an Enemy, what should be that which provokes her wrath and indignation? what that should be that makes the envious Snakes, wherewith Antichrists head is periwigg'd to hiss and spit out their Venom? Does she Storm and Rage because we have retained two or three of her fine Ceremonies? that cannot be the Origin of her spight! They are *those things* wherein the Church of *England*, and Non-conformists are mutually agreed, that *Rome* opposes this Church in, and they are *those things* wherein this Church symbolizes with *Rome*, wherein she differs most from the Non-conformists.

When the Heathens triumphed in the great feats of their *Maximus Tyrius*, and *Apollonius Tyanæus*, the Christians answered, That whatever good effect their Religion ever had upon the Lives of Men, was owing to those Principles and Truths, which it had *in Common* with Christianity; Thus will Dissenters plead, That whatever success this Church has had in its Ministry upon the Souls of Men, is due to those fundamental Truths and Doctrines of the Christian Faith, which she obtains *in Common* with the Reformed Churches: On the other side; The *Roman* Faction persecutes and undermines this Church upon grounds equal to all the Reformed Churches, and this Church is angry (at least) with Dissenters for those matters wherein she seems to approach too near *Roman* corruption.

2. We come now to *the Atheists*; A Generation so abominable, of whom we may yet say as was said of the *Astrologers in old* Rome, *Hoc genus hominum semper vetabatur, & semper in urbe nostrâ retinebitur*; A people *always banished*, yet *never departed from the City*; such a Tribe are *these Atheists*. Every one has a hard word for them, yet many entertain them: you shall not meet with a Man in a Thousand, but will liberally rail at *damned*

Machiavellian policy, which yet according to the proportion of *their little wit*, they ſtrive to imitate: which tempt me to think, that they hate not ſo much *his Knavery*, as they repine at their *own folly*, and judge not his politicks *ſo evil*, as they are vext that they *cannot equallize* him; That they Nibble at *his principles*, becauſe they cannot reach *his Wit*.

It is but a ſlender evidence that another is *in the right*, becauſe *Atheiſts* are ſo groſly *wrong*; And yet *to declaim* againſt Atheiſm, has theſe conſiderable Advantages: Firſt, ſome think they may be ſecurely Atheiſtical themſelves, if they can but flouriſh with a few ingenious Sentences againſt them; and a witty Libel againſt ſuch, is a ſufficient Purgation for him that has a Talent to expoſe the reſt of Religion: Secondly, it's a plauſible Argument that that Religion muſt needs *be excellent*, that has *the worſt of Men* for its Enemies. and they muſt certainly be adjudged worthy perſons who are ſo Zealous againſt ſuch Impiety; what Man of Charity would ſuſpect *Irreligion* to wear the Cloak of *fervency againſt Atheiſm*? And yet it's common to hear it hotly proſecuted in the Pulpit, by ſome who come warm from that Service to the practiſe of it. I dare refer it to the judgement of the impartial world, whether he be not a kin to *a practical one* who diſputes *for a God*, and then tears Men in pieces for *worſhipping* him, according to the beſt Light they can get from Scripture and Nature? And in *ſuch a manner*, as where with they can find no fault, but that 'tis *not their own*? and poſſibly *was their own* too not many years ſince, and probably had been ſo ſtill, had they not been purchaſed into a better?

There are Three Queſtions here to be reſolved. What Atheiſm is? Whence it comes? And wherein does it oppoſe the Church, and contribute to a ſeparation from it?

1. *What Atheiſm is, and who is the Atheiſt*? And this is as needful *an Enquiry*, as any of thoſe *needleſs ones*, wherewith he tormented us in the laſt Chapter: I aſſure the Reader, It is a word of a Volatile Nature, and Verſatile Signification, as any that gives us trouble with its double meaning. In *Germany an Atheiſt* once ſignified a Perſon that medled with *the Popes Miter, or the Monks fat Bellies*: *Epicurus* of old ſome think was branded with Atheiſm, becauſe he could not ſwallow *Polytheiſme*: At home ſome conclude he muſt be an Atheiſt that ſcruples the *Jus Divinum of Tythes*: And if he ſhall detein *a Tyth Pig*, he is a *Sacrilegious Atheiſt* to boot: Formerly it border'd upon Atheiſm to have denied the Divine Right of Epiſcopacy; but I ſee one may queſtion that now, and yet be a Chriſtian: What then an Atheiſt is? I ſhall leave to the Induſtry of this *Enquirer*.

2. But from whence this Atheiſm ſhould proceed, is a Queſtion that has been ſo fully Anſwered by a Learned and Honourable Pen of late. I ſhall not need to repeat any thing: Yet this is obvious; That when *Preachers* Preach againſt *Preaching*, their Auditors may eaſily ſtumble into a belief, that what they Preach is not much material to be believ'd, when they had rather it ſhould

should not be Preach'd at all, than not under their Formalities: If ever I should hear a *Tradesman* bitterly inveigh against *Trading*; that it never was a good World since there was so much *Trading*; that we never had peace since we had *Markets twice a week*; that there can be no peace or settlement expected, so long as Men may lay out their Money, and buy their Goods *where they pleased*, let such a one be dealt with as severely as the Enemies of Trade can wish, I shall not plead his Cause: To this if we shall adde, that when the World takes notice, that they who are called *the Men of God*, and are therefore supposed to *know most of him*, to be *most like him*, and to represent him *in their lives* as a Holy, Merciful, Tender, and Gracious God, as they present him *in their Doctrine*, shall yet with unwearied fury prosecute Men to Poverty, Prison and Grave, meerly for non-complyance in those things which themselves have invented; they give great occasion to Atheistical inclinations to say in their Hearts, As good believe no God, as one *so cruel and unmerciful*, as *his own Servants represent him to us*.

3. But the last is the most important Question: *How, or wherein does Atheism undermine the Church? or contribute to separation from it?* That Atheism does oppose *all Religion* as such, was never doubted, in that it takes away the great Principle pre-supposed to all Religion, *That there is a God*; but how it does particularly oppose the Church of *England*, so far as she differs from others, is I conceive the present Question. It is somewhat difficult to imagine, that they who have *put off Humanity*, should scruple to put on any garb of *obtaining Conformity*. They who have renounced *one God*, will easily own *a Thousand Ceremonies*; what were it to them if all the Numerous Rites of *Rome* were introduced, could they but get the sense of a Deity obliterated out of their Consciences, that they might sin without the stings and twinges of an approaching Judgment, which is the prefection they aim at? *Their Heaven* has *no God* in it, *their Hell no Devil* in it; It must be a strange *Imposition* which an *Atheistical Throat* cannot swallow; he that is of *no Religion*, (as I said) can subscribe to *any Religion*, to which those Principles are very cognate, which are contrived to avoid persecution under *all Forms and Constitutions*: How therefore they should be such grand Enemies to Conformity, I wait to be resolved. 1. *The Atheists* (says he) *will not set their wit against a Faction, they must have higher Game*: By this Argument our *Enquirer* has demonstrated himself to be no Atheist; yet I would not have him trust much to it; I suppose too they have found higher Game than Ceremonies, when they open their black mouths against God himself. 2. *They inflame the Causes of Divisions, provoke Mens Passions, and exasperate Mens Minds one against another.* He has spoken more truth than perhaps he is aware of in these few words: I have ever suspected, and now have warrant to utter my suspicions, that it is a spice of Atheism that exasperates Men against those who quietly and peaceably Worship God Blessed for ever.

3. *They scurrilously traduce all that's serious; and what they cannot do by Manly discourse, they endeavour by Buffoonry: Thus these blind Beetles that rose out of filth and excrement* Buz *about the World.* And now I am sure where to find the whole Club of Atheists. Amongst those Churchmen who blaspheme *the Office of the Divine Spirit* as *a Noise and Buz*: Amongst those who openly scoffe at *the Beauty, Loveliness, and Preciousness* of a Redeemer: Amongst them who have no better way to confute *the Satisfactoriness of Christs* death, then to make God like *an Angry Man when his passion's over, and has glutted himself with revenge*; amongst them who can no otherwise describe the Zeal of Christ for his Fathers House, then by the furies of a *Jewish Zealot.*

He has now dispatch'd *the remote Causes of separation*; and if the Reader complains, that amongst *all these Causes* he hears not a syllable of *that grand Cause* of all Divisions, *the needless imposing of things doubtful or sinful, as the Terms of Union and Communion with the Church*: Let him have a little Patience, he may find it in *its proper place, viz.* amongst *the nearer, immediate, direct, and proper Causes of separation*, whither we now follow our *Enquirer.*

CHAP. III.

Where the more immediate Causes of Distractions, viz. *Rashness of Popular Judgement, Judaisme, Prejudice, want of true Zeal, are considered, and the* Enquirer *manifested to have been something ridiculous.*

HItherto our Author has acted with good Applause the part of *a Compassionate Enquirer*; he will now alter his Properties, and play the other part of *the Passionate Enquirer.* He has worn *the Person of a Friend* long enough; and will now put on the severer *Habit of a Judge*, and then he is resolved *some body or other shall smart for it*, though that belongs properly to the Lictor's or Beadle's Office.

There is only one small matter which he would *bespeak*, and if he could *procure it too* of his Reader, he need not doubt the happy issue and success of this Discourse; and that is a certain *Commodity* which Men call *Candour*; a very *scarce and dear* Commodity it is grown, since the Writers of this Age Appealed from *the Tribunal* of their *Judicious and Learned*, to the *Chancery* of their *Courteous and Candid* Readers.

If any should be so Critical as to enquire, what *this Candour* is; he may understand that it is *a Native Whiteness* of Judgement,

ment, that has not yet received *the Prejudicate Tincture* of any Colour, but retains its *Indifferency and Neutrality* to every Customer. Such a Mind the Reader is desired to bring to the Perusing of this Chapter; that he be neither Black nor Blew, his affections devirginated neither with Ass. nor Diss. but a meer *Rasa Tabula*. But how much of *this Candour* might pleasure him, is a great Question; for if *a small Quantity* would serve *his occasions*, no more then may incline one to think he never expected a Bishoprick, or more then a first-rate *Benefice*, for writing this elaborate work; I have just such a parcel of Candour lying by me, that will exactly fit his turn. But this will not do! He has *bespoke so much of his Reader*, *That he will believe, it is not any delight he takes to rake in the Wounds of his Brethren and fellow Christians, that prompts him to this undertaking*: A *Candour* to believe all this? It must be a stretching white-leather Candour indeed that will reach to the Belief of such Incredibles, That he that *makes Wounds* does not delight *to rake* in them; that he that forges Crimes, takes no pleasure in divulging them, that he who reproaches his Brethren most passionately, tenders their repute; That he who would *ruine Mens Bodies*, has such *a Compassion for their Souls*: I confess I cannot furnish him with such a Lot of Candour; but if I meet with *Apella* the Jew, or any other Candid Wise-acres, that have enough to spare, he may possibly hear further.

Proceed we therefore to the next, and immediate Causes of the Distractions of the Church of *England*.

1. The first assigned Cause, *is popular rashness and injudiciousness*. Whom he should intend by *the people*, that are *so rash and injudicious*, I am at a great loss in my Conjectures: One division of a Kingdom, is into *the Sovereign*, and his *Leige People*. Now it must not be *the People* in this notion, that are so hair-brain'd, for that would include the Clergy: Again, the Subjects of a Kingdom may be divided into *the Nobility*, and the *Common People*: but neither under this notion must rashness and injudiciousness be charged upon the People, for besides that, this would still reflect upon *the Inferiour Clergy*, it would also cast reproach upon the Peoples Representatives. There is therefore another distinction of us all, we are all either of *the Clergy*, or *the Laity*, that is in plain English, the *Populace or Vulgo*: and there is good ground for this classical distinction, not only because we hear of *Sermons ad Clerum*, that is, to those who are *Gods Lot*, *Portion*, and *Inheritance*; and others *ad Populum*, the common *Herd and Drove of* Animals: but because we read *of old*, such a division made by the *Learned and Judicious Pharisees*, Joh. 7. 49. *Have any of the Rulers or* Pharisees *believed on him, but* This People *that knows not the Law, is accursed*. And yet it will be thought scandalously harsh to fix the guilt of popular rashness and injudiciousness, upon *the people* in *this Acceptation*, for under this denomination will come, not only *the Nobility and Gentry* of a Nation, but *the Prince* himself, unless he should take

take on him *the Office of the Priesthood*. We must therefore find out *Another sort of People* that must bear the burden of this reproach; That which comes next to my thoughts, and offers fairest to assail the difficulty, is the distinction between *the Conformists* and *the Non-conformists*; and thus we shall need to seek no further for *this grand Cause* of Non-conformity. The Non-conformists are *a Rabble-rout* of *rash and injudicious* People: And there needed not *half so many* words to assert it, though *twice as many* will not prove it.

This Cause *Of Popular rashness*, is like the Chamæleon, which they say accommodates it self to *the nearest Subject*, and will resemble *all Colours* save one, only it's not susceptible of that, which our *Enquirer* wants most, *Candour*: For the Dissenters complain of the injudiciousness of the People, the rashness of their Censures, how little they understand their principles, how wrongfully they interpret their practices; and thus at last, it wheels about to be *a reason of Conformity*.

There is no Theme upon which School boys are more frank in their Satyrical invectives, then of *the common People*, That it is πολυκεφαλον, *Bestia multiceps*, *A Hydra* with many Heads, and yet in none of them, *vel Consilium*, *vel Ratio*, *vel Discrimen*, *vel Diligentia*, to saith his *Compere* the great Roman Orator.

But I admire how these *Men of Wit and Judgement* would live, if *the People* whom they so undervalue as not worthy *to wipe their Shoes*, did not Moil and Toil, and Plow and Sowe, and Spin, that *they* might lie at ease, arrayed *like* Solomon *in all his Glory*.

The method of our *Enquirer* in managing this business, is this: First, he will speak to the purpose, then a little nearer to the purpose, and last of all close home to the purpose.

1. That which he says to the purpose, is this: *When weak persons judge of the Determinations and Counsels of wiser men, and those that pierce no further then the meer surface of things, pass a Verdict upon those whose Judgements are profound and deep, there can no good issue be expected.*

The Vulgar indeed do not wear *the Head-pieces of States men*, nor *the Helmets of Commanders*, they have no *need for*, and therefore *no use* of them, they pretend to no Authority to inspect the secrets of State, to dive into the Intrigues and Mysteries of Government; but yet under correction, they are a degree removed from Beasts; and pretend and plead a right to *judge of their own Actions*, as they are accountable to the Divine Majesty. They are not concern'd to enquire *upon what reasons* the Legislators shall bring in a Law, but they are concern'd to enquire into the Lawfulness of the thing, that they may give a more Humane, chearful, and rational Obedience. Understand me in things especially relating to the immediate Service of God, and their Acceptance with him therein: In other things, they can *part with their own Right*; and though the Command should prove

unrighteous, they may *righteously submit*; but in matters of Religion they ought to be conducted by more manly Arguments.

Gods Worship, *is a Service reasonable*, and if I must not use my Reason *there* to judge of its lawfulness, it had been an Advantage to be made, what some would make us, Brutes: for as he that has lost his smell, has this to comfort himself withal, that as he enjoys not the satisfaction of the worlds *perfumes*, so he is not tormented with *its Stinks*. Thus though the Beasts have not the contentment of *enfranchised Reason*, so they are discharged the cumber and torment which necessarily arises from restraint put upon the dictates of Right Reason. I shall never therefore reconcile the contradictions of those who cry up *a Rational Clergy*, and yet at the same time revile *a Rational Laity*.

There was once one *Virgilius* Bishop of *Saltzburgh*, that held an odd Opinion, that there were *Antipodes*, the Pope it seems suspecting some dreadful *Heretical pravity* to lurk under that uncouth Opinion, convenes, condemns, executes him for a downright Heretick: Our *Enquirer* protests, *He can by no means commend the Zeal of the Bishop*. Its like there was some of *that popular rashness and iniudiciousness* in it: but what would he have had the poor honest man have done? Subscribe that *twice two make five and twenty*? or against Mathematical Demonstration swear, and declare, *That the Globe of the Earth has no Diameter*? I grant that *weak persons* (and we are all *so weak*) ought to suspect themselves, and give very much to the Counsels and Reasons of wiser men: But to deny our Reason in its most easie velitations, and familiar instances, for fear of being Schismaticks, or causing Distractions is but a Whimsey, or a Wind-mill got into some mens Heads; and as it came in, so let it come out again at its leisure.

But this example of *Virgilius* was untowardly applyed; for if the good Bishop had on his side *Demonstration* against *Papal determination*, as it proves that *the private reason* may be more Orthodox then *the publick*, so I dare refer it to any ordinary Body to judge, whether in case any Distractions or Separations had followed in the Church thereon, the Pope or the Bishop had been the Culpable cause of them? *The latter* for asserting that which was simply *impossible should be otherwise*, or *the former*, for executing him as an Heretick for not denying a demonstrable verity?

2. But now he will *come nearer to the purpose*. I assure him he had need; for hitherto we have been a filthy way off. Its an *Observation not more ancient then true*, *That the same thing seldom pleases the many and the few*. And a wise Observation it was, whoever first observed it to the World! I once heard a Grave Divine in the Pulpit, after all the Civil Prefaces of the Learning, Piety, and Orthodox of *that Father*, quote St. *Austin* for such another *Observation*, *not more Ancient then true*, *Omnes homines sunt peccatores*! All the Question here will be, whether *the many* or *the few*, are more probable to be *in the Right*? Oh no

doubt

doubt *the few*: for *the many* are *the People*, *the Vulgar*: why then I refer it again, whether *popular Judgement* can be the Cause or Reason of Non-conformity, when *the many* are infallibly of that Religion which the Law allows and encourages, and *the few* ever of that way which is discouraged and persecuted.

But (says he) *wise men generally take middle Counsels*; That was indeed *a little nearer the purpose*, if not *too near*; for hence the World will discern, that many Church-men are *none of the wisest*, who are all for *high-flying or high-trotting* Counsels: But what are those middle Counsels? He tells us in the Instance of *Erasmus*, *who was the Glory of his Time and Countrey, for the sagacity of his Wit, and simplicity of his Temper*; and he indeed hung *in the middle* between Popery and Protestantism; or as some say, *between Heaven and Hell*; so that hence we learn another secret, what are *those middle Counsels*, which wise men would take, if occasion served; but then I doubt *the many*, and not *the few*, would entertain those middle Counsels.

I meet with this *moderation the word*, at every Corner, but *moderation the thing is as* great *a rarity* as *Candour*; moderation *in Ceremonies* that's a Vice; hence we hear of these famous Sermons: *Conformity according to Canon justified, and the new way of moderation reproved. A Sermon preached at* Exon, *in the Cathedral of St.* Peter. *At the Visitation of the Right Reverend Father in God* Anthony — This is that moderation our *Enquirer* attacques so briskly, p. 25. charging the best of Clergy-men with *debauching their Office, and undermining the Church*; but now to be moderate like *Erasmus*, between *Canterbury* and *Rome*, that's your commendable Temper.

And such a Religion did *Calvin* fear, like the Interim of *Germany*, the Articles of *Hen.* 8. Ἐνότικον of *Zeno*, the Ἔκθεσις of *Heraclius*, the Τύπος of *Constance*. Such a one as was too high for this World, and too low for the Next, such a one as whether or no it provided a Heaven in the other world, would make a Purgatory of this; *Calvin* was taught when to be *Zealous*, and when *Remiss*, to be Zealous *in Gods cause*, and Remiss *in his own*, which seems somewhat a better frame then theirs, who are *fire and tow* for their own inventions, but as *Cool as Patience* it self in the concerning Truths of the Gospel.

To prove the moderation of our Church, and that *she cuts by a Thred*, (or by Threds) *between both these extreams*; he produces an Argument both from Papists and Protestants; *Those of the Church of* Rome *cannot but confess all is good in our Liturgy*: *Protestants on the other hand generally acknowledge the main to be good*; *And so between them both, give a glorious testimony to this Church as guilty of neither extream.* There is nothing more Childish then to use an Argument, which with the same ease may be retorted as used; for those of the *Roman* Church condemn the Liturgy as *defective in necessaries and fundamentals*, and Protestants complain of *many Redundancies and Superfluities*; and

so

so between them both, they charge her as *guilty of both the Extreams*.

But I am afraid he has promised himself more respect from *Rome*, then they will allow her. If they will confess that all is good in the Liturgy now, I am sure they would not have confest so much, when it pray'd to be *delivered from the Tyranny of the Bishop of* Rome, *and all his detestable Enormities*. But if it hath been so well amended *to gratifie the Papists*, give it *one amendment more to gratifie the Protestants*, that they also may say, *There's nothing but what is good in the Liturgy*.

I have read, that when the Embassadour of the Duke of *Brandenburgh* presented his Mandate in the Council of *Trent*, he shewed his Masters good Affection to, and Reverence of the Fathers of that Synod, They answered very discreetly, *That the Council had heard his discourse with great content, especially that part of it, wherein the Elector doth submit himself to the Council, and promiseth to observe the Decrees of it, hoping that his deeds will be answerable to his word.* But here (as the Historian observes) *the Council pretended a promise of Ten Thousand, when the bargain was but for Ten.* The Embassador *proffer'd Reverence*, and they *accept of Obedience*. And thus the Fathers of the Council of *Carthage*, giving an account to *Innocent* I. that they had condemned *Caelestius* and *Pelagius*, desired him to conform himself to their Declaration: He commends them in his Answer, that *remembring the old Tradition, and Ecclesiastical Discipline, they had referred all to his Judgement, whence All ought to learn whom to Absolve and whom to Condemn. An usual and pious allurement* of the Church of *Rome*, which yielding to the Infirmity of her *Children, maketh show to believe, that they have performed their Duty.* By the same Artifice would our *Enquirer* wheadle the Non-conformists into a good mood, to acknowledge *the Liturgie to be good in the main*, and that there are *only some redundancies which they would have taken away*.

3. And now at last he will come home, and close to the purpose, *That which I chiefly intend* (says he) *is, that a great part of men have not their minds Elevated above the Horizon of their Bodies, nor take an estimate of any thing, but by its Impression upon their senses*: from whence (say I) it must needs follow, That most men Judge of *the Excellency of a Religion*, as it approves it self to *their Carnal Interests, and Ambitious Expectancies*; and if that will make *to the purpose* to prove, that popular injudiciousness is *a Cause of Separation from the Church*, let him make his best of it: some think *it proves the contrary*.

Two things he will spend his Rhetorick upon as he goes along. The Excellency of the Liturgy, and the Excellency of his own Preaching; which last we have had enough of to satiety, if not to nauseousness, very lately.

The Excellency of the Liturgy lies, in *being composed plainly, gravely, and modestly, no Turgid or swelling words, no novelty of Phrase or Method, no Luxuriancy of Wit or Fancy*: And might not

not this have passed for proof of the Excellency of the Homilies? If *the plain Composition, the Gravity, the Modesty of the Homilies*, innocent of *all turgid or swelling expressions*, free *from novelty of phrase, or curiosity of method*, could not procure a reprieve, but they are condemned to silence, and instead of them, we are all for *Artificial Compositures, sugar'd phrase* that will melt in the mouth; And *method* such as brings *Forreigners* to *England* to *be instructed in it*, *Quaintness of Expression*, and *Luxuriancy of Wit and Fancy*? why then was not the Liturgy a little lickt over, and trimm'd up more sprucely? But if those Characters of *Plainness, Gravity, Modesty, humble Expressions, Ordinary Language*, be the Glory of *the Prayers*, why not of the Preaching also? the old Homilies were too course Spun for modern Ears to hear, the phrase too heavy and common, the method cryptic and obscure; but Preaching is now more finical, and accommodated to *the Itching Ears of well-bred Christians*, we are got into the mode of *Lovedays Letters*, and Cassandra and Cleopatra; as if God did not understand strong lines, as well as the Ladies, and as if we were not as much obliged to tell *the People their duty*, as *God our wants* in *small English*.

Popular Rashness and Injudiciousness are great evils as it appears; but how to apply a proper and suitable Remedy to the evil is all the skill. And first, *the Church of* Rome (says he) *have a Cure for this; they appropriate all Judgement to the Clergie and deal with the rest of Mankind as Sots and Idiots. But the Church of* England *makes not her self the Mistress of Mens Faith, or imposes upon their understandings; she teaches that our Saviour hath delivered the Mind of God touching the points of Necessary Belief plainly, and in other lesser matters she allows a Judgement of Discretion.* And will not this *Judgment of Discretion*, or Indiscretion become a cause of all those Divisions, Separations and Schismes, of which so loud a peal has been rung in our Ears? And is not this a *New Name* for *Popular Rashness and Injudiciousness*? *Oh* (says he) *since the peace of the Church often depends upon such Points as Salvation does not, and since in many of these every Man is not a Competent Judge, but must either be in danger of being deceived himself, or deceiving others, or of necessity must trust some body wiser than himself, she recommends as the safer way for such private persons to comply with publick determinations, and in so advising she jointly consults the Peace of the Church, and the Quiet of Mens Consciences.* These matters seem very Artificially put together, and the taking them asunder will discover their weakness. 1. Let me have a solid Reason given, why *the Peace of the Church* should be laid upon *those things* which *Salvation depends not* upon? Is *the Peace of the Church* grown so cheap and vile that it should be sold for things unnecessary? One while he cries up Peace so high, *p.* 108. *That he protests, if a Man must suffer Martyrdome he thinks it equally acceptable to God to lay down a Mans life for preservation of the Peace and Unity of the Church, as in Testimony against flat Idolatry*: Are they not to be admired that value Peace more

than

than their Lives, and yet will venture it upon indifferent things? Are they not more to be admired, that extol Peace so highly, and yet sacrifice it to their own meer wills and pleasures: But is not this yet the greatest wonder, that Peace should depend on that which Salvation does not; and yet he will sacrifice his Life for it, as soon as against that, upon which his Eternal Damnation depends? 2. If Men be *not Competent Judges of their own Actions*, what is become of *that Judgement of Discretion*, wherewith we were even now gratified? Is this *the Judgement of Discretion*, to surrender our Consciences *upon Discretion*? The *Romanists*, who *appropriate all Judgement to the Clergie, and deal with the rest of Mankind as Idiots and Sots*, could have said no more, then that Men are *not Competent Judges* of their own good: And if we may not be allowed a liberty to judge for our selves *in those lesser matters debatable amongst Christians*; much less in those greater matters which they say admit of no debate: And how much our Authors Cure is better than that of the *Romanists* I know not; I think they are both worse then the Disease. 3. Why is not the danger of trusting others, as great as trusting to the Word of God? Mine Eyes may be presumed to see for my conduct as faithfully as another Mans; and my own Conscience will probably be as faithful to my Eternal concerns as any ones I could find. And I have tried it, that it's much easier to obtain a moral certainty that I have *the Mind and Will of God*, then that I have grasped the Mind of any Church from their most Authentick Articles, or Confessions of Faith. 4. Why should others be troubled, that I am not so wise as they? It's none of my trouble that they use their liberty without dispising, whilst I exercise that which God has given me without judging. If we must trust others in composing Worship and Divine Service for us, Terms of Communion of Christians, where is then the difference between *That*, and the Popish Implicit Faith? *This will make the People Sheep indeed, but silly ones* I am sure; such is my weakness, I can see no difference between *Blind Obedience*, and *trusting others with the determination of it*; or between *Implicit Faith*, and *trusting others as the Reason of my Belief*; either then here's *no Remedy*, or one *worse* then the Disease: *The Disease* at worst is but to enjoy a liberty in those things *Christ left free*; nor is there any necessity that freedom should be avoided; and *the Remedy*, to trust others blindfold with our Consciences, whom we have no assurance will be over tender of them; and if we had, have no Commission from Christ to intrust them any where but in his own hands.

But *what now if the people be foolish, proud, and contentious; what remedy has the Church then? Why she only declares them guilty of sin and contumacy, and casts them out of Communion* But what if they be humble, and meek, and peaceable, only cannot by searching, studying, praying, discoursing see the lawfulness of the imposed Terms of Communion? Must the Church *declare them contumacious, and cast them out of Communion?* It may tempt

tempt us to think that is no Remedy of Gods preſcribing, that deals alike with humble and proud, the peaceable and contentious. But for all this demureneſs, I doubt there are *other Remedies* beſides *a Declaration*, other *Weapons* beſides *Paper Pellets*. There is *a Significavit*, a Writ *de Excommunicato Capiendo*, *de Hæretico Comburendo*. *An Oath of Abjuration*, *a Warrant of Diſtreſs*, if they ſubmit not to thoſe Impoſitions, upon which *Salvation depends not*; and in their judgements, ſuch as are ſinful, and then damnation is hazarded by them.

I have often admired the modeſty of the Church of *Rome*: *She never put any Man to death*: *She never burnt any at a Stake*: It's not for *Holy Men*, *Men of Peace* to ſhed Blood, to be Inſtruments of Cruelty; No, the Church only delivers them over to *the Secular Power*, and what he does with them, how he treats them ſhe knows nothing: Thus having drawn in the Magiſtrate to do her Drudgery, ſhe *wipes her Mouth*, *waſhes her Hands*, and proteſts ſhe is *Innocent of the Blood of theſe Men*.

An Objection was timely foreſeen that might be made againſt his Diſcourſe, and like a perſon that knew how to be friendly to himſelf, he has put it in favourable and gentle Terms.

This will equally extend to all other Reformed Churches, as well as our own, and might have brought forth all the evil we complain of, and impute to it in former Ages as well as now; for the generality of the People were not much wiſer then now.

That is, the Proteſtant Churches have their Members as lyable to miſtake beyond Sea, as ours on this ſide; they have *Private Reaſon* as well as we, and *a Judgement of Diſcretion* too; and ſo had the Primitive Times too; Chriſtians then were equally in danger of being ſeduced by their own injudiciouſneſs, and yet the one continued in much peace, and the other ſtill continues ſo, without *the Remedy of Impoſing Myſtical Ceremonies*: Nay, to ſpeak properly, without *the Diſeaſe of Impoſitions*: The *not impoſing doubtful things as the Terms of Communion*, were with them the Prophylacticks of Schiſms and Diviſions, and the impoſing of them (which is ſtrange) is the Therapeutick of Schiſms and Diviſions, to which he anſwers two things.

§ 1. *That other Churches found the effects of Ignorance and Arrogance more or leſs as well as we*: To which might be returned; That they found it not in thoſe things which they left free; but if at any time they laid the weight of the Churches peace upon unneceſſaries, they found in proportion the ſame effects of the ſame Cauſe, which we have found: *But* (ſays he) *that was to be aſcribed not to the happineſs of their Conſtitutions, but to the unhappineſs of their Conditions.* I confeſs I am not altogether of his mind; it was mainly due to the happineſs of their Conſtitution there were fewer Contentions, becauſe fewer Bones of Contention; and leſs of Diviſions, becauſe they united upon a Scriptural, and therefore ſecure bottom.

That *the Church of* Corinth *needed a check for her Diviſions*, is very true, and a ſmart one ſhe deſerved: And 'tis as true too;

That

That the Apoſtle had not Recourſe to our *Modern Remedies*, to exert his Apoſtolical power, to ſilence the Clamour by darting the Thunderbolt of Excommunication againſt the weaker Party; and yet he had a far more ſpecious pretence, then any Church Governours can now juſtly Claim: His Apoſtolical Commiſſion *to Plant and Water Churches*, which would have commanded *Reverence* to his Perſon, and conciliated *Authority* to his Determinations; and yet he either had no ſuch power, or durſt not uſe it, but took the Healing way, tolerating things tolerable, and preſſing them mutually to Love and Peace under their various apprehenſions about Mint, Aniſe and Cummin. But yet he thinks, That *the Reaſon why Primitive Chriſtians, whilſt under perſecution, had one Heart and Mind, was, becauſe they ſubmitted their private Fancies to publick Safety*: Which is only the aſſigning of an Imaginary cauſe for a Real one. Primitive Chriſtians, whilſt ſurrounded with Adverſaries, were *of one Heart and Mind in the main*, and the true Reaſon was, becauſe their dangers and preſſing fears had not yet let in that *Prelatical Impoſing Spirit* into the Guides of the Church, which Eaſe and Liberty afterwards produced. And though we dare not charge our Diviſions upon *Peace, Plenty and Liberty*, which are great Mercies to a ſinful people; yet we would lay the Saddle upon the right Horſe, the blame at the right door; 'Tis not the injudiciouſneſs of the People, who are willing to be quiet, and accept of reſt upon tolerable terms; but the obſtinacy of Clergymen, who make their own Wills, the reaſon of their Injunctions, not conſidering that all mens Intellectuals are not of one ſize and height; and yet as if Conſciences were to be fooled with, Mens Souls ſported with, they neceſſitate the People either to act againſt their Light, or to fall under the ſevere laſh of a Pœnal Statute.

§ 2. *That theſe Evils broke out no ſooner* (ſays he) *is due to the contentment generally took in their firſt Emerging out of the Darkneſs and Superſtitions of Popery*: Very true! they were ſo full of Admiration at what God had done for them; that they conſidered not what further to ask God to do for them: ſo tranſported that they were out of *Egypt*, that they never conſidered *how ſhort the Wilderneſs was of the promiſed Land*; And hence he might have anſwered himſelf, p. 13. *If there be ſuch a dangerous Affinity between the Church of* England *and* Rome, *how came it to paſs that* Cranmer *and* Ridley, *&c. laid down their Lives in teſtimony to this againſt that*? *Rome* was not built, nor will it be deſtroyed in one day. Our firſt Martyrs laid down their Lives in Teſtimony that *Rome* was guilty of dangerous Doctrines, but not that we had nothing remaining that needed a Reformation.

2. A ſecond cauſe is, That *a great part of this Nation having been learned with Jewiſh Superſtitions or Traditions, hath thereby been indiſpoſed to an uniform reception of, and Perſeverance in the Reformation of Religion held forth by this Church.*

When I firſt read the charge of Judaiſm brought in againſt the Diſ-

Dissenters, I remembred what I had met with in the virulent Titles of some *Lutheran* Book: *Calvinus Judaizans*; *Calvinianorum Nestorianismus*; *Calvino-papismus*; *Novus Calvinistarum Deus*; to which we may add, *Calvino-Turcismus*, and some others. I began to cast about in my thoughts for the reason of such an Imputation: Have they set up *an Image of the Aaronical Priesthood*? Have they *their High-Priest*, *their Inferiour Priests and Levites*, attired in *the Linen Ephod*? with all the Accoutrements of *the Aaronical Wardrobe*? And that they may more exactly symbolize therewith, have they provided for their Priests *an Altar*? settled upon them *a Levitical maintenance*? and to carry on the parallel have they erected Temples distinguisht by *sacred Apartments*? Have they *their Holy*, and *most Holy place*, Chancelled in for the greater Reverence of *the sacred Mysteries*? to secure them from the Approaches of the prophane and injudicious Rabble? and have they all these enclosed within *Holy Ground*? And the rather because *Dionysius* assures us, *That the Christians in his time, had solemn Temples like the Jews, and the Chancel severed with special sanctifications from the rest of the Church: whereas* (says he) *the Christians of the first Age made their Assemblies both in such private places, and in such simplicity as the Apostles did*: I considered again, whether the Non-conformists had not introduced *a pompous pedagogie of Ceremonies*? and imposed them upon the People? whether they might not perhaps have instituted some Feasts and Holy-days, upon an old Judaical account, as of the Circumcision, Purification? or whether they had not appointed *some Office*, or solemn *special Service* for Lustration of Women after Childbirth, in correspondence with the *Jewish Purifications of Women* after their *uncleanness*? whether they observed any sacred time Analogical to the Passover, or had any Foot-steps of the ancient *distinction of Meats* into *clean and unclean*? Or any thing that might give cause of suspicion, that they had by a κακοζηλία revived *Moses* his extraordinary Quadragesimal Abstinence? or whether they introduced Temple instrumental Musick, whether loud sounding Cymbals or Organs, having such good proof in *Durantus* his *Rationale*, from that Text, *Let every thing that hath Breath praise the Lord*! And when I could find no track of reason for the charge upon these accounts, I went to enquire of the *Enquirer*.

And it does appear (by his talk) that a more secret and mysterious Judaisme then all this, has of old been rooted in this Nation, that no Ecclesiastical Pick-axes have been able to extirpate it; *for* (says he) *the greatest difficulty that* Austin *the Monk found here, was to bring the Inhabitants from the observation of Easter, and some other Rites according to the manner of the Jewish and Eastern Churches; to that of the Roman and Western: and the doing it, cost the lives of twelve hundred Monks, who stubbornly opposed his Innovations.*

This *Austin* was certainly a Formal Fop as ever this poor Nation was haraſſed with. Two third parts of his whole Ministe-

rial

rial or Apostolical work, was Ceremony; for upon these conditions he propounded Peace to the *Britains*. *If you will in these three things obey me, In celebrating Easter in due time: In Baptizing according to the manner of the Roman Church, and in Preaching the Word to the Nation; all other Ceremonies, Fashions and Customs, though they be contrary to ours, yet we will willingly bear with them.* Was not this a person of great moderation? But why not condescend in *those two*, as well as *all the rest*? Oh, its the Religious policy of *Rome*, to reserve as much of Ceremony, as like a *Quit-rent*, will serve to Recognize the Papal Soveraignty; and that point of *Soveraignty alone* will in due time fetch in the other. To own that Churches power to impose, its Jurisdiction to award *terms of Communion*, though but in one single instance, is *the delivery of a Twig and a Turf*, which give her *Livery and Seisin* of the Conscience in the name of the whole Man. But if *Austins* Reformation was so *Ceremonious in it self*, and so *bloody in its effects*, which are, if not inseparably, yet commonly linked together: If he could have spared *their blood*, they could well have spared his *Ceremonies*.

But was this *Austin* so great a *Saint*, that he must be quoted for the famous Reformer of Judaisme? or were those Martyrs of *Bangor* such wicked Jews, that the Non-conformists should be their Spawn? No. This Austin *made our Ancestors only Romanists, he found them Christians before; and perhaps of a better, and more generous race of Religion, then that he engrafted upon the old Stock.* Then it seems that *Christians*, however *Judaizing* in one instance, may be of a Nobler temperature then an old doting Ceremony-monger, that for a meer Caprice, would *mingle their Blood with their Sacrifices*: But how does the Example *come home to the purpose*? *Austin* was mad upon his Ceremonies? The *Britains* were tenacious of their Easter: wherein are Dissenters concern'd in their quarrels, who neither dogmatize with the *Quarto-decimanes* or *Quinto-decimanes*? Let the one plead Traditions from *Papias* and St *John*, with the Eastern, the other pretend the Pope and St. *Peter*, with the Western Christians, we can be contend they should scuffle it out, about Goats-Wool, or Moonshine in the Water.

Our *Enquirer* nevertheless, will give us an Anatomy of Non-conformity, and lay open their principles to view, that it shall appear that *a vein of Judaisme runs through the whole Body of Dissenters.*

1. The first Vein is: *Their great Hypothesis is, That nothing is lawful in the Service of God, but what is expresly prescribed in the Scripture.* Which proposition needs many limitations, before the Dissenters will father it, and when it is so limited, they will challenge him to prove, that there's the least Capillary of Judaism in it: And 1. If by *Nothing* he understand *no meer Circumstance*, as of general time, place, he may know what they have told the World a thousand times, they hold *many such* things lawful, which are not prescribed particularly in the Scripture: but if by

Nothing

Nothing he will understand *no Ceremony*, being *an outward and visible Sign of inward and invisible Grace*; they do assert, that *no such thing* is lawful in Worship, but what is prescribed in the Scripture. 2. If by *in the Service of God* he mean, only an action accompanying Gods Worship, not of *Religious Application*, but such as is common *to civil and ordinary affairs*, they deny it *any principle of theirs*, that nothing may be done in time of Worship, by the Worshippers, that *is not commanded by the Scriptures*. But if by *in the Service of God*, be meant, *so in it*, that it is *part of it*, they own it to be their avowed Judgement, that nothing is lawful in the Service of God, as a part of worship, which is not commanded by God himself. 3. If by *expressly commanded*, be intended, what is *literally and Syllabically* so; they disown it as any *Hypothesis* of *theirs*: But if by *expressly commanded* be intended what is either κατ' ἐξοχην, or by *just consequence* derived thence, they are ready to justifie it without fear of Judaizing. That nothing, no outward visible sign of inward and invisible Grace, is lawful in the Service of God, as a part of that Service, which is not expressly, or by just and clear consequence prescribed in the Scripture, not excluding whatever help from the Light of Nature, to give us a fuller prospect into the Mind of God in his Word. Nor ought this to be stigmatized as a principle peculiar to the *Jews*, but common to them, with all other true Worshippers of God, from the beginning of the World. To impose a *part of Worship*, is not only an Imposition *upon Man*, but *upon God*. The Imposer does not only compel *Man to offer*, but *God to Accept* what is offered: for seeing *the End* of All Worship is *Acceptation* with him *whom we Worship*: this End must influence our whole Worship. And this is supposed by the Church of *England*, who prays, (or invites to pray) *for true Repentance and the Holy Spirit, that those things may please him which we do at this present*: Now it's neither *our own Fancies*, nor *the Will of Men*, but *the Word of God* that is a Competent Declaration of what will please our Creatour. Dissenters plead further: That the same God, that *Jealous God*, who Commanded the *Jews* not *to add to Gods Commands*, commanded it upon Reasons *common to all Mankind*. It was well urged against the *Jews* by the Learned Author of *Orig. Sacr.* p. 214. *That the meaning of that strict Prohibition*, Deut. 12. 32. *was no other, then that Men should not of their own Heads offer to find out new ways of Worship, as* Jeroboam *did; but that Gods Revelation of his own Will, in all its different degrees, was to be the Adequate Rule of the way and parts of his own Worship. And I would fain know of the* Jews, *whether their own severe and strict prohibition of things, not at all forbidden in the Law of God, came not near the adding to Gods Law?* Again, God having given no rule to direct us in excogitating and imposing new Worship, it's impossible but we should mistake; or if we should hit now and then upon some happy contrivance, we must thank his blind *Goddess fortune*, rather then the fruitfulness of our own Understandings:

dings: And this looſe principle would make the World a Pantheon, or encumber it with a *πανήθεια*, and would multiply Religions according to the multitudes of the Churches, as they of old *multiplied their Idols, according to the number of their Cities*. They do alſo ſtill believe from *Heb.* 3. That Chriſt was *faithful to him that appointed him* the Lord of the Church, in making all neceſſary proviſions for the encreaſing, confirming, and perfecting their Graces, for their Comfort, Edification, and all ſpiritual neceſſities, without any new Additional Contrivances for thoſe ends: Nay they ſay yet further; that as theſe new ways and parts of Worſhip, do impeach Chriſts faithfulneſs in diſcharge of his truſt, ſo they do invade his Regal Office too, in making new Laws to bind the Conſcience; An uſurpation which no Earthly Prince would endure; For when a Prince has Eſtabliſht his Laws, though he ſuppoſes that the Inferiour Magiſtrates muſt have *time and place* to execute them in, which are left at liberty according as emergency in particular caſes ſhall invite to determine them, yet he allows them to make no *new Laws*, upon pretence of neceſſity to execute *the old ones*, nor to inſtitute *new Obſervances*, under colour of more effectual managing *old Cuſtoms*: And it ſeems reaſonable that the People ſhould *not practiſe* what Miniſters may *not Preach*; nor the Church *impoſe* what it cannot *command in Chriſts Name*; but it can only uſe Chriſts Name to urge *whatſoever he has commanded them*; nay the *Enquirer*, when perhaps he did not think of after miſchief, told us *p.* 4. That *we incur St.* Pauls *Anathema, which he denounces againſt him (whoſoever he be, nay if an Angel from Heaven) that ſhall Preach any other Doctrine, then what hath been received*: And if the Church has received any ſuch command to invent and impoſe Ceremonies, ſhe can tell us where others may read it as well as her ſelf. And to conclude at preſent, they ſay, That this one Principle granted, That the Church may impoſe upon her Members whatever is *not expreſly forbidden*, does either put the Body of Chriſtians under a more heavy Yoke then that of the *Jews*, or elſe torment them with fears, that they may be ſo: And indeed ſuppposing this exorbitant power to impoſe parts of Worſhip or Ceremonies, or any of theſe things in Debate, the condition of the *Jews* was much more deſirable *in this reſpect* then that of Chriſtians. For,

§ 1. Their Law-giver was *Jehova*, who had an abſolute and unlimited power over them, and they that are *Gods Creatures* will not grudge to be his *Servitors*: He was Lord paramount of Worſhip and Conſcience, and *might he not be allowed to do what he would with his own?* He is *the God of the Spirits of all Fleſh* and ſhall they not *live in ſubjection to him*, who expect to *live in a Kingdom* with him? Since there is a *neceſſity* of obedience, it ſweetens it unſpeakably, that it's both *Intereſt and Priviledge* to obey; and that he who requires obedience is *their God*, a God whoſe *Will* is *the Rule of Righteouſneſs*; and therefore *the moſt ſatisfactory Reaſon* of his Commands, and his Creatures Duty; And *Impli-*

plicit Obedience is then Honourable, when God calls for it.

§ 2. As their Law giver had ἐξουσίαν, Authority to Command, so he had δύναμιν, a power to influence the weakest Elements. He was ἀντοκράτωρ, and had absolute Sovereignty, and παντοκράτωρ, one of Almighty power, which was a double encouragement to the observers of his precepts: For 1. He was hereby able to secure the Obedient in his Service; upon which Account Christ claims the Legislative Power over Conscience. *Jam.* 4. 12. *There is one Law-giver, who is able to save, and to destroy.* 2. By this Power he could render efficacious *these Rudiments*, which in themselves were but *beggerly Ordinances*: and produce by them Spiritual and Supernatural effects. And I am inclined the rather to think that God has not committed the *Moral Power* of *instituting*, much less the *Soveraign Power* of *imposing Religious Ceremonies and Observances*, because he has not communicated that *other Power* to bless their own appointments, nor invigorate them with success: God may well be allowed to *Command what he pleases*, seeing he can and will *bless whatsoever he Commands.*

§ 3. Their Law-giver was *Faithful*, one to whom they might securely commit their Consciences, one with whom they might with the greatest satisfaction of Heart commit their Souls; He that has a sole right to any thing will be faithful in keeping it, because 'tis *his own*, and who may better be entrusted with the *Guardianship* of Worship and all Religion, then their Owner? But though we ought not to be Censorious, yet we may, and ought to exercise some prudence and caution to whom we resign our selves in matters of Religion, though *the best of Men*, not knowing how they may use us. but well knowing, that we may more easily Captivate our selves to the Will of an Imposer, then being once enthralled, vindicate our selves into our Christian Liberty: Or if for no other Reason, yet for this, because they are *but Men.*

§ 4. The Jewish Yoke was a *determinate Yoke*: It was *Onus*, but *Determinatum*. *A Burden*, but *a stinted Burden*: It's no small alleviation to the *Labourers toyl*, when he *knows* his work; to *the Traveller*, that he knows his Journeys end: The *Jews* had their work before them, but upon *the Modern Principle*: The burden of Christians is *Indefinite*, which is but *a better word* for *Infinite*: The Truth is, in these Humane Impositions we see *the beginning*, but no Man knows *the end of them*; it's a *Nemo scit*. Our load must be bounded with *no other Limits* then a Churches *Will*; and that Will perhaps bounded with no other then its *Power*, since it's Canonizd for good Divinity, That *the Church may impose whatever is Decent*, and that *the Church is Judge of what is Decent*; though who the Church is, is not so certain.

§ 5. Their Law-giver was one of known and approved Tenderness, who either apportioned his work to their strength, or their strength to his work; he fitted the Yoke to their Neck, and

their

their Neck to the Yoke. The main thing that renders Christs own *Yoke so easie*, his *Burden so light*, is, that as his *Authority imposes*, so his *strength supports*. Men may lay heavy burdens on our shoulders, but where there is most need, cannot *touch them with one of their Fingers*.

§ 6 Their Law-giver was one, who in all his Impositions consulted *their own good* and benefit, as wel as exercised *his own Authority*: The *Jews* wrought hard indeed, but their work had much of *wages* in't. The design of their Mystical Rites and Ceremonies directed them to a *Saviour*. *Legal Administrations* well order'd, were *Gospel Priviledges*: Before Christ came Ceremonies were *Illustrantia*, such as discovered the Person, Nature, Office and Grace of the *Messiah*; *a Candle is better then no Light*; but to us they are all *Obscurantia*, such *as darken the state of Christianity*. As *before the Sun-rising*, the Prodromous Clouds, whose edges are fringed with Gold, comfort us with the hopes of an approaching greater Light, which when the Sun is up, do but darken the Horizon. Thus did Ceremonies illustrate Christ at *the Annuntiation*, but obscure him at his *Advent*.

It will be needless further to Vindicate the Dissenters: I shall leave them to the *Enquirers* Patronage; who by the same Reason, that he justifies the Church of *England* from Popery, will I hope clear the Non-conformists from Judaism, *p.* 12. *All* (says he) *is not to be accounted Popery which is held or practised by the Church of* Rome: Nor (say I) is all to be accounted Judaism which was either the principle or practise of the *Jewish* Church. *p.* 13. *Nor is it reasonable to say such a thing is received from the Church of* Rome, *because it is there to be found, unless it be found no where else.*

And as little Reason to say the Dissenters *have received this Principle from the* Jews. [*That no Worship is Lawful* (for that is their Principle) *but what is prescribed by the Scripture*] *unless it were found no where else.* But this was a Principle so clear in the Light of Nature, that *Numa* the great Ritualist of Heathen *Rome*, durst not hope that ever his Ceremonies would ever obtein amongst a people that had Eyes in their Heads, unless he had, or pretended to have, a Conference with his Goddess *Ægeria*. Thus the *Palladium of* Troy, that Mystick Ceremony, in which the Fate of their City was wrap'd up, is supposed to have come down from *Minerva*; the famous Image in *Diana's* Temple, *Acts* 19. 35. Is supposed to be Διοπετὲς, *fallen from* Jupiter; and whilst the World was silly enough to be imposed upon by those little Artifices, we had scarce a New Shrine, Altar, place of Pilgrimage erected, but upon pretence of some rising from the Dead, or an Angel from Heaven, or a Letter from the Virgin *Mary*, or some such Pious Frauds and Religious Cheats, which the Priests had at their Fingers ends.

Let us now consider the *Enquirers* Discourse upon this Principle. *That all absolutely necessaries are so determined, we readily grant,* (says he) *and that all those Rites prescribed by our Saviour are*

neceſſary to be obſerved, we will yield them; but that nothing is lawful but what is to be found ſo preſcribed, we utterly deny. And ſo do we! Let that end the Controverſie: When Rethoricians have ſtanted it out in fine Language, and Ruffled a little in Phraſe, appoſite words and expreſſions they have ſatisfied their Office, and are not obliged by the Rules of their Art, either to ſtate the Queſtion, or ſpeak to it: *Something may be practiſed which is not preſcribed* that we grant; but from *ſomething* to *every thing* is too great a Leap for *Bucephalus*: From *practiſing* to *preſcribing* is another large ſtride; from *Circumſtances* to *Ceremonies* is a third; from *Civil* things to *Sacred* is one more; from *Indifferent* to *Neceſſary Conditions of Church Communion* may go for another; and from the common Accidents that attend *the Worſhippers as Men*, to *Parts of worſhip*, are Inferences which we can neither make to lead or drive.

2. We come now to a ſecond Judaical Principle: *That all Princes and Law-givers are bound to conform the Municipal Laws of their ſeveral Dominions to the Inſtitutions of* Moſes. This indeed has a ſtrong taint of Jewiſh Leaven in't; which they who plead ſo Zealouſly for the *Jus Divinum* of *Tythes*, *and Holineſs of Places*, becauſe *Moſes* once *put off his Shooes* may do well to adviſe upon; the Non-conformiſts for ought I know are little concern'd in't. We grant that there is no neceſſity that the Temporal Sanction even of *the Moral Law it ſelf*, ſhould be the ſame under the Goſpel, that it was under the *Adminiſtration of* Moſes: That the Violaters of the *Lords days* Holy Reſt ſhould be ſtoned, as the infringer of the *Sabbath* was of old; the Adulterers ſhould be puniſh'd with Death, or a Blaſphemer endure the ſame now which then was exacted. Law-givers do conſider the tempers and diſpoſitions of their Subjects in theſe matters; we are no further concerned herein then to pray, that they who moderate the Affairs of the Empires of this World, may be directed with Wiſdom from above, may order all things in a ſubſerviency to his Glory by whom they Reign, and the publick peace, welfare and proſperity.

3. A Third Inſtance is in Excommunication. *Which* (ſays he) *they hold muſt be by a Synod or Presbytery, and the Prince as well as the People muſt be ſubject to the Sentence.* Here are ſeveral Queſtions that invite our ſerious debate; as 1. What is *the proper Seat* of the power of Excommunication? 2. Who are the *proper Objects* of this Power? 3. Whether to fix the power of Excommunication be a Judaical Principle? And 4. Whether a Prince may come under the Edge of that Sword? Any one of which would require more room then I have allotted my ſelf to turn in: What I ſhall ſay is this.

1. That *the Synod or Presbytery* are the Seat of Excommunication, carries as fair proof at leaſt, as the *Chancellor* who is a *Lay-man*, or at beſt a *Deacon* of no Scripture Inſtitution, can ſhow for himſelf by Divine Right.

2. That all ſcandalous perſons are lyable to that Cenſure, is true

true in the general, but that it may not be executed upon a Supreme Magistrate, arises from peculiar Maximes of Government, upon which the safety of a Kingdom depends: I know not that this is a Principle of the N. C. for my part I disown it.

3. That this was a Jewish Principle to excommunicate their Kings, I do not certainly know, nor dare positively determine: That they received any such standing Law from God I do not find: That *a High-Priest* did once actually separate a King upon the score of his Leprosie, we read, and that others perhaps would not do as much if a Prince pleased not their Humours we have no security: I should shrowdly suspect their Inclinations this way, whoever they were, that inserted this Doctrine into our Bibles; which we find in the Contents of the 149. *Psalm*. *The Prophet exhorteth to Praise God, for that Power he hath given to the Church to Rule the Consciences of Men*: Which they refer to v. 5. and the following. *Let the Saints be joyful in Glory; let them sing aloud upon their Beds. Let the high Praises of God be in their Mouth, and a two edged Sword in their Hand; To execute vengeance upon the Heathen, and punishments upon the People: To bind their Kings with Chains, and their Nobles with Fetters of Iron.* If this be the Power God has given *the Church over the Consciences of Men*, the Non-conformists did not insert it, and wish it may be expunged the Bible.

4. *He must by no means omit their Superstitions about the Lords-day; which must be called a Sabbath too, though such Name is no where given it; either in the New Testament, or any Ancient Writer that he knows of.* Here are two Branches, the first *de Nomine*, the second *de Re*.

1. *De Nomine*; whether the Lords-day may be called a Sabbath, especially with the usual Epithete, *The Christian Sabbath*? That it *must be so called* (as he falsifies) the N. C. assert not: That it *may be so called*, they are willing to enter a sober discourse with him when he is at leisure. *A Sabbath* in general, signifies no more then a *Day of Rest*. And he that owns the day may be called *the Lords-day*, must needs own it to be a *resting day*, and by consequence a *Sabbath day*; and the greatest fault herein is, that it's good *in English*, but stark naught *in Hebrew*. Nay there's somewhat more will follow, This day of which we speak, is called *the Lords-day*, Rev. 1. 10. *I was in the Spirit on the Lords-day*. And the reason of the Appellation is this, because the *Lord Jesus* has a special interest and propriety in that day: As the great standing Ordinance of the Gospel is called the *Lords-Supper*, 1 Cor. 11. because it was *instituted by Him*, and was to be devoted to *Communion with him*; so *this day* is called *the Lords-day*, because it was determin'd *by him*, and ought to be dedicated *to him* in his Service and Worship, that we may approve our selves eminently *the Lords Servants*, upon that day which is eminently *the Lords-day*. And if so, it will challenge the Title, not only of a *day of Rest*, but *Holy Rest*: And if Men were not swarming full of Crotchets and Idle Whimseys, and Superstitious

ous Dotages, they would never ſcruple to call that a *Holy Sabbath day*, which they muſt confeſs a *Holy reſting day*.

But how came *this preciſe qualm* over *our Enquirers* heart, that he is ſo skittiſh at the word *Sabbath*, becauſe forſooth it's not given *the Day* in the New Teſtament? They have ſome ſingular privilege and prerogative ſurely, that may *inſtitute* what *Officers*, what *Offices* they pleaſe, though neither *Name nor Thing* be found there, nor print nor mark of the leaſt Foot-ſtep, when the poor Non-conformiſts may not uſe indifferently an innocent word, which ſignifies no more in it ſelf, then he will acknowledge to be found there.

But how is this a point of Judaiſm; or how one of *the neaver cauſes* of ſeparation? If it be, we may confidently ſay we have imbibed both from the Liturgy of the Church, which teaches the Miniſter to rehearſe the Fourth Commandment. *Remember the* Sabbath-day *to keep it Holy*; and then enjoins us all to pray, *Lord have mercy upon us, and inclline our hearts to keep this Law*; but if *this Word, this Doctrine*, be of ſuch pernicious a contagion, as to infect us with Judaiſm, and Non-conformity; we have need of another, *miſerere mei Deus!* for *Keeping* it.

That this name *Sabbath*, applyed to the Chriſtian *Holy-day of Reſt*, is found in *Ancient Writers*, I ſhall not urge. *Ignat. Epiſt. ad Magnet.* Let *every one of us keep the Sabbath ſpiritually, not in bodily eaſe*, (only) *but in the ſtudy of the Law*. Nor the Author of the Sermons *de Tempore*, (none of *Auſtins*, for any mans word will go further then his) *for ſo we rightly ſanctifie the Lords Sabbath, as the Lord hath ſaid. In it thou ſhalt do no manner of work*; but this I ſhall ſay, that he that denies it to be *a Day of Holy Reſt*, it's no great matter *what he calls it*. And he that owns it ſuch, muſt be moſt rediculouſly obſtinate, that denies it may properly be ſo called.

2 We come to the diſpute *De Re*. And firſt he charges the N. C. *That the Lords-day* amongſt them, *muſt have all the Nicety of Obſervation that the Jewiſh Sabbath had: and which is yet worſe ſuch Obſervation thereof is made one of the principal parts of Religion.*

What the Non-conformiſts hold and practiſe in this point, is ſo well known from their Writings and Converſations, that no man can poſſibly ſlander them, but he muſt do it againſt his Conſcience; which had *the Enquirer* attended to it, would have taught him other Language: what was the practice of the beſt Chriſtians who lived up in any good meaſure to the Holineſs of their Profeſſion, that is the practice of the Non-conformiſts; and wherein they come ſhort, have cauſe to be humbled in the ſight of God: If any Individuals have added any Jewiſh Auſterities, or invented any Superſtitious ſeverities to make the day a Legal Yoke, we wiſh they may be no more favourably dealt with, then *thoſe other Additions* that have been made to Religion.

For

For the publick Service of the day, I shall give the Reader a piece of *Clemens Rom. lib. 2. cap. 59. On the Lords-day frequent more carefully the Temple of the Lord, that ye may praise God who made all things by Jesus Christ; whom he sent unto us, and suffered him to dye for us, and raised him from the dead; for what can excuse him with God, who meets not to hear the saving Word of God concerning the Resurrection. On which day, we pray thrice, standing, remembring him who after three days rose again.*

For the private observation of the day, the same Author *lib. 5. cap. 9.* thus. *We admonish you, Brethren and Fellow-Servants, that you fly vain words and filthiness, pleasant jests, &c. for on the Lords days, which are our days of Rejoicings, we do not permit you to do or speak any thing not savoury; for the Scripture saith, serve the Lord with fear.*

St. *Hierom* commends the *Egyptian* Monks, *that they designed the Lords days wholly to Prayer, and reading the Holy Scriptures.* The Author of the Sermons *De tempore.* This day *is called the Lords-day, that in it abstaining from all earthly works, and worldly pleasures, we should only give our selves to the service of the Lord: Let us therefore Brethren, observe the Lords day, and sanctifie it, as it was commanded them of old concerning the Sabbath.* If our *Enquirer* had the trimming up of this Author, he had dressed him up for a Marane, a baptized Jew. *Chrysost.* on Gen. 2. *God from the beginning did insinuate unto us this instruction, to set apart, and separate one whole day in the Circle of every Week, for spiritual exercises;* And in Homil. 5. on Math. *Let us prescribe this as an unmovable Law to our selves, to our Wives and Children, to set aside one day of the Week, and that wholly to hearing, and laying up of things heard.* Isidore Hispalensis: *The Apostles therefore ordained the Lords-day to be kept with Religious Solemnities, because in it our Redeemer rose from the Dead, which was therefore called the Lords-day, that resting on the same from all Earthly affairs, and temptations of the World, we might intend Gods holy Worship, giving this day, due Honour for the hope of the Resurrection we have therein.*

But because our *Enquirer* admires the Piety of former Ages in this our *Britain*, I shall come a little home, and see what were the publick Constitutions of our own Nation. Leg. Inæ. cap. 1. An. 692. *Si servus operetur die Dominicâ per præceptum domini sui, sit liber; & Dominus emendet* 30 *s. ad Witam: si servus sine testimonio Domini sui operetur, Certum perdat,* (i. e. vapulet) *si liber operetur ipso die, sine iussu Domini sui, perdat libertatem: If a Servant work on the Lords-day at his Masters Command, let him be free, and his Master be fined thirty shillings, If a Servant without his Masters Order do any work, let him be whipped. If a freed Man work on that day, without the Command of his Master, let him lose his Freedom.*

Concil. Bergham. cap. 10. An. 697. „Si in vesperâ præcedente „Diem solis, postquam sol occubuit, autin vesperâ præcedente Diem „Lunæ, post occasum solis, servus ex mandato Domini sui opus

, aliquod ſervile egerit, Dominus factum octaginta ſolidis Luito. *If a Servant on the Evening before Sunday, after Sun-ſet, or on the Evening before Monday, after Sunſet, ſhall do any ſervile work by Order of his Maſter, let his Maſter pay for his fault 4 pounds,* c. 11. *If a Servant on thoſe days ſhall travel, let him pay to his Maſter ſix ſhillings, or be whipped.* c. 12. *If a Free-man be guilty of the ſame offence, let him be liable to the Pillory.*

Excerpt. Egb. Archiepiſcopi Eborac. An. Chr. 750. c. 36. *God the Creatour of all things made Man on the ſixth day, and upon the Sabbath he reſted from all his Labours, and ſanctified the Sabbath for the future ſignification of the ſufferings of Chriſt, and his reſt in the Grave; He did not reſt becauſe he was weary, who made all things without Labour, whoſe Omnipotency cannot be wearied; and he ſo reſted from his Labours, that he made no other Creatures then he made before; He made no other Creatures afterwards, but whatſoever he made, he makes them every year, to the end of all time; He createth new in their Souls and Bodies; living Creatures and Beaſts, without Souls; The Soul of Man is given by God, and he renews his Creatures, as Chriſt ſaith in the Goſpel,* My Father worketh hitherto, and I work; *Chriſt ſuffered for us in the ſixth Age of the World, and on the ſixth day, and reformed loſt Man by his Sufferings, and the Miracles which he wrought, He reſted in the Sepulchre on the Sabbath-day and Sanctified the Lords-day by his Reſurrection; for the Lords-day, is the firſt day of the New World, and the day of the Reſurrection of Chriſt; and therefore it is* Holy, *and we ought to be his, ſpiritually keeping* a Sabbath-day, *Sabbatum Sabbatizantes*

Leg. Presbyt. Northumbr. , Mercaturam in Die ſolis exercere, , & Curias alicubi celebrare prohibemus, opus etiam quodlibet, , & omnimodam vectionem, ſive in plauſtris, ſive in equis, ſive , in aliis oneribus ferendis, Qui contra hoc deliquerit ſolvat, — *We forbid any to Trade, or keep open Courts on the Sunday, and alſo all other work whatſoever, and all manner of Carriages, whether with Carts or Horſes, or in bearing any other Burdens*: he that tranſgreſſes this Decree ſhall pay —, niſi ſit viator neceſſitate , compulſus, vel ob cibi inopiam, aut ex cauſâ evitandi inimi-, cos. *Except he be a Traveller compelled by neceſſity, either by the want of Food, or to avoid the Enemies.* Reader, whether this be Judaiſm or no, I ſhall leave to thy more ſedate judgement; but it is a mighty ſtrong temptation rather to be one of thoſe *old Jews*, then one of *the new Chriſtians.*

Leg. Eccleſ Cannut. An. Chriſti 1032. Die quidem Dominico, , mercata concelebrari. Populive conventûs Agi. (niſi flagitante , neceſſitate) planiſſimè vetamus. Ipſo Die ſacroſancto, præterea , à venationibus, & opere terreno prorſus omni, Quiſque abſtineto. *We do abſolutely forbid all Markets, and Aſſemblies of the People to be kept on the Lords-day, (except in caſe of urgent neceſſity)* and moreover, *Let every one refrain from Hunting, and from all other earthly buſineſs upon that ſacred day.*

A little now for diverſion let us ſtep over the Seas, and look into

to the temper of the times, under the Reign of *Charles the Great*: „ Statuimus ſecundum quod Dominus in lege præcepit, ut Ope„ ra Servilia diebus Dominicis non Agantur, ſicut, & bonæ me„ moriæ Genitor meus (Pipinus) in ſuis Synodalibus edictis man„ davit, *i. e.* Quod nec viri Ruralia opera exerceant, nec in vineâ „ colendâ, nec in campo Arando, vel fœnum ſecando, vel ſepem „ ponendo, vel in ſylvis ſtirpare, vel arbore cædere, vel in Pe„ tris laborare; nec domus conſtruere, nec hortum laborent, „ nec ad placita conveniant, nec venationem exerceant: *We ordain, as alſo the Lord hath commanded in the Law, that no ſervile works be done on the Lords-day. As alſo our Father of happy memory, in his Synodal Edicts hath commanded, that is to ſay, That Men neither exerciſe the labours of their Farms, neither in dreſſing Vineyards, nor in Plowing, nor in Mowing Graſs, or in laying a Hedge, or to grub up, or cut down Trees, or to labour in Quarries, or to build a Houſe, or to order a Garden, or to hold pleas, or to practice Hunting.* Item fœminæ opera Textilia non „ exerceant, nec Capillent; veſtitus non conſuant, vel Acu„ pictile faciant, nec lanam Carpere, nec linum battere, nec „ publicè veſtimenta lavare, nec verveces tondere, habeant li„ citum, ut omnimodis. Honor & Requies diei Dominicæ ſer„ vetur. *Let not Women practice Weaving; let them not take pains about their Hair, nor mend their Cloaths, nor work Needle-work or Point; nor Card Wool, nor Heckle Flax, nor waſh Cloaths openly, nor Shear Sheep, That the Honour and Reſt of the Lords-day may by all meant be ſecured.* Conſt. Carol. M. fol. 32 It will be time now to draw to a concluſion, when I have noted:

§ 1. It looks like a piece of great diſingenuity to Bait Diſſenters like Jews, for the indifferent uſe of the word *Sabbath*, becauſe not found in the *New Teſtament*, and at the ſame time to worry them with Barking words, and Biting penalties, for not practiſing upon that *very day*, *Humane Ceremonies*, which (name and thing) are perfectly ſtrangers to *the New Teſtament*.

§ 2. It ſeems ſo far from a *next cauſe* of *Non-conformity*, Religiouſly to obſerve *The Lords-day*, that it were rather an Allurement to Conformity, when we obſerve the Church ſo ſtrictly commands her Children in the Rubrick, *After every Commandment, Kneeling to ask God mercy for their tranſgreſſion of the ſame.* And if the Diſſenters were of this *Enquirers* principles, they muſt be obliged to be Non-conformiſts, till the Liturgy in that particular ſhould be Reformed.

§ 3. Its highly diſingenuous to upbraid them with the leſs ſtrictneſs of ſome of the Reformed Churches abroad in this one point, when they are not allow'd to vouch their principles and practices in *twenty others*.

§ 4. It deſerves a *moſt ſerious Enquiry*, whether any Church did long maintain any ſplendour of *Practical Religion*, that grew remiſs and looſe in the Conſciencious Obſervation of the *Lords-day*.

§ 5. Whether the ſtrict and Religious attendance to the

Worship of God on that Day, be a cause of Non-conformity or no, is uncertain; but this is certain, that *the loose and formal* observation of it, has been a direct and immediate cause of that *Atheism* and *Prophaneness*, and perhaps of *those Judgements* which have broken in upon us.

§ 6. It ought to be matter of serious Humiliation and Repentance, both to the Conformists and Non-conformists, that between them both, they have suffered Piety to decline in their hands, by a visible degeneracy from the strictness of former time, *in Sanctifying Gods name on his Holy-day.*

§ 7. It ought to be considered, That they who of late times have written against *the Divine Right* of that day, have yet spoken so honourably of, and pleaded for, the *Holy use of the day*, as will justifie greater Reverence to the day, then I fear the Non-conformists are guilty of. The Learned *Brerewood*, Tract. 1. p. 47. *I confess, It is meet that Christians should on the Lords-day abandon all worldly affairs, and dedicate it wholly to the Honour of God.* The B. of *Ely*, p. 255. *Devout Christians, who are so pious affected, as that on the Lords-days, and other Holy-days, they do resolve to retire, and sequester themselves from secular business, and ordinary pleasures and delights, to the end they may more freely attend the Service of Christ, and Apply their Minds to Spiritual and Heavenly Meditations, are to be commended and encouraged; for the doing thereof is a work of Grace and Godliness, and acceptable to God.*

§ 8. It would be enquired, whether it have not a greater Tincture of Judaism, to enjoin *other days for Holy-days*, which have *no footing* in Gods word, then to spend the Lords-day in pursuit of those things which concern our Everlasting peace, which is clearly warranted thereby: B. *Andrews* urges this against *Trask*, *The Apostles kept their Meetings on that day; on that day they were συναγόμενοι*, i. e. *held their sacred Synaxes, their solemn Assemblies: to preach, to pray, to celebrate the Lords Supper, δεῖπνον κυριακὸν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ κυριακῇ*, The *Lords Supper*, on *the Lords-day*; *for these two words only, the Day and the Supper*, have *the Epithete of κυριακὸν, in the Scripture, to shew that its alike in both.*

5. A Fifth Instance of their Judaical Principle is *their Doctrine of Absolute Predestination.*

This Doctrine has perplext the *Enquirer* beyond measure, he would mention it every where *willingly*, but knows not where to mention it *pertinently*: It was lately one of the *Pretended*, or *Apocryphal*, and now its become a *Real* and *Canonical*, nay a *near and immediate* Cause, or at least *the just sixth part of a Cause of separation.*

I shall for once suppose, that all the Non-conformists are *Sublapsarians*: Now let him show me that Article or Doctrine to which this Church requires subscription, relating to the Decrees of God, to which a Sublapsarian cannot freely subscribe.

The 17 Art. of the Church speaks without question her sense in

in this matter: *Predestination to life, is the Everlasting purpose of God, whereby before the foundations of the World was laid, he hath constantly decreed by his Counsel secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of Mankind, and to bring them by Christ to Everlasting Salvation.*

It were more for this Gentlemans comfort and credit, to write *a serious and Compassionate Enquiry into the* Pretended *and* Real, *the* Remote *and* near Causes *of his own conformity to that Doctrine which he so pleasantly derides.* And with what Engines, Machines, Screws and Pulleys he could hale his Conscience to a Subscription: The old Device was good. *Lingua juravit sum, mente juravi nihil*: It's a happy freedom of Spirit, a blessed enlargement of mind to *subscribe any thing, and believe nothing.*

Two things there are which ought to have been cleared; first, that the Doctrine of predestination is *a Jewish Principle*; secondly, that it's a Cause, or *a piece of a Cause of Non-conformity.*

For the former he makes it out thus: *He that seeks the source of so odd an Opinion, can fancy mind pitch no where more probably, then upon the absolute Decree of God to favour the Posterity of* Abraham *for his sake*: Alas Poor Man! And had the Church of *England* (thinks he) no more wit, then to talk of *an Everlasting Purpose before the foundation of the World, of a constant Decree to deliver from Curse and Damnation* some that *he had chosen out of Mankind*, and bring them to *Everlasting Salvation*, from such a Ridiculous Ground? But the difficulty was, how to make this a piece of Judaism; and when Men see themselves *insuperable Tasks*, they must rub through them *as they are able.*

The *Second* will yet be more difficult: For many Conformists have been, and are *Sublapsarians*, and some Non-conformists *Subter-Sublapsarians*: And the *Enquirer* told us *p.* 7. *That the Articles of the Doctrine of our Church do with such admirable prudence and wariness handle these Points*, (the Five Points) *as if particular respect was had to these Men, and care taken that they might* Abundare sensu suo. So necessary it was our Author should confute his own Contradicious Cavils!

Well! Whether this Church, the *Jewish* Church, the Non-conformists, or any, or all, or none of them be of this opinion, yet it is a most monstrous one! For (says he) *The N. T. has often assured us, that at the great day God will judge the World in Righteousness, and that without respect of Persons, he will render to every one according to his Works.* Wonderful! And are the *Sublapsarians* all this while to seek, *how God may be righteous* in the Great Day; if he Decreed to *give Grace to some Men which he never owed them*, and *left others* to perish under *the Fruits of their own Apostacy and unbelief?*

6. The last Instance is *their superstitious observation and interpretation of Prodigies.*

The Works of God are all Admirable, those of Creation *Glorious*, those of Providence *Mysterious*; we have reason to Revere *his Greatness* in all that he *doth them*; his *Wisdom* in all, in that *he can*; his *Goodness*, in that *he will* make them Bow to subserve his own Counsels, and Purposes, *in working together for good in them that love him.* To fetch *our Creed* from *that Book* of Providence we allow not, it's well if we can make Gods use of them to awaken a sleepy World to Repentance.

The greatest Prodigy that has startled me of late, has been a Story that many tell us; That in several places in the Nation *the Graves have been seen to Open, and many old Hereticks to have risen, and walk'd, and talk'd, and preach'd, and printed Books;* whom we verily believed to have been as dead and rotten as their Heresies. Thus I remember *Ltirinensis* calls *Cœlestius, Prodigiosum Pelagij Discipulum*, That *Prodigious Scholar of* Pelagius: Something was useful to have been said about Prodigies, and it must come in here, or no where, and therefore let it pass for a *Jewish* Opinion, and a sixth part of one whole Cause of Nonconformity.

[3] He reckons *Prejudice* amongst the causes of our distractions, and let it passe *for a third*: There is a sound sense, in which our *Enquirers* Notions may be very true, could we be but so happy as to hit out.

Tertullian complained sadly of those insuperable prejudices against the Christian Religion, under which they all groaned. *Non scelus aliquod in Causâ est, sed Nomen.* It was *the Name of a Christian* that was *their greatest Crime. Bonus Vir* Cajus Sejus *tantum quod Christianus.* A poor Woman amongst the Ignorant Devoto's of *Rome*, was instructed by *her Ghostly Father*, that *the Hugenots were all Monsters*: It hapned that one of her Neighbours spying a Protestant passing by, told her, *That Man is a Hugenot*: It's impossible replyed she, *He looks as like a Man as ever I saw one in my life.* Thus are Dissenters by prejudice and partiality sentenced and executed in the peremptory Judgements of Many, before their Cause is heard, or thy admitted to a fair Defence and Tryal.

I shall therefore spare my common place Book, and reserve my stores for more important occasions, and at present borrow our *Enquirers* more refined Collections (for they will serve any Mans turn) to evince that prejudice is a Cause not why there are *so many* Non-conformists, but that there are *no more.*

This Prejudice *alone was able to Seal up the Eyes of the Gentile World against the Sun of Righteousness, when he shone upon them in his brightest Glory, and to confirm them in their blind Idolatries, when the God that made Heaven and Earth gave the fullest discoveries that it was fit for Mankind to expect.*

Upon the Account of this, the Jews *rejected that* Messias, *they had so long expected, and gloried in before he came, though he exactly answered all the Characters of Time, Place, Lineage, Doctrine and Miracles that their own Writings had described him by.*

No

No wonder then if the Non-conformists suffer under Prejudice amongst those that have not only seen their Doctrine stigmatized with the odious Marks of Judaism, their Churches with the Brand of Schism, their Persons with Treason and Rebellion, but also had been formed into a Combination against them; and so had both their Consciences and worldly Interest engaged against them and it.

For *few have the generosity, and strength of mind to bear up against the Torrent of Times, or confidence enough to oppose the Impetuousness of common Vogue, or prevailing Opinion. There are not many that have the sagacity to discern the true Images of things, through those thick Mists that cunning Politicians cast about them. It's very ordinary to take the Condemnation of any Person or Party for a sufficient Proof of the Accusation, and to think the Indictment Proved. It was enough both with the* Jews *and* Gentiles *against our Saviour, that he was condemned as a Malefactor: The Ignominy of his Cross was a greater Argument against him with the Generality, then the excellency of his Doctrine, or Evidence of his Miracles was for him.*

The Arguments against Non-conformity were not weighed, *but* numbred: *An Impeachment of Accumulative* Disorder, Schism, Faction, Judaism, Popular Rashness, and Disobedience to Magistrates, was formed against them, and still *there was more in the Conclusion then could be made out by the Premises*, and in the Sum Total, then in the *Particulars of which it consisted; for though no Point of all those could be proved against* their Doctrine, Worship or Discipline, *yet they must be so upon the whole. This being Agreed, the Cry is then*, Crucifige! *Destroy it Root and Branch.*

To all which add, that it was the corrupt interest of some to deceive others into an ill Opinion of the Reformation, *partly as being enraged*, that any sparks of Primitive Purity should be left unquenched, which might burn up their vast hopes they had conceived of *dividing the spoil amongst themselves*: *Partly being conscious to themselves, that by Reason of their no more then* Declamatory, Vulgar and Puerile Abilities improved from Apothegms and Proverbial Sentences, *they could not be fit to fill any considerable place in a Church* Reformed according to the Scriptures; *nor yet to content themselves* with a private station in a persecuted Society; they therefore chose to fall in, where they might be entertained as *useful Tools*, and rewarded for their singular Talents of Reviling.

And when once it is come to that pass. That by this Craft we get our Livings, (one, two, or three) *like the Silver-smiths of* Ephesus, *no wonder if the Apostolical Doctrine and Government be cried down, and the Great* Diana of *Pauls*-conformity, *cried up sooner then built. The sum is this; some men are blindly led by their Education*, and care taken that they never come to a view of the Dissenters principles; *others by Interest*, forced to espouse that Religion that has the fairest Dowry; *A third sort, by their Re-*

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putation, that they may not seem to have been in an Errour; And when all these Causes shall (as they too frequently do) happily concur, such an associated and complicated Temptation, will form a prejudice strong enough to oppose the clearest Demonstrations, and to stir up so much rancour and malignity, as shall incessantly persecute mis-represented Truth.

I will add one word from the Learned Author of *Orig. Sacr.* and conclude. *It cannot be conceived, That many out of Affectation of Novelty, should declare themselves Christians in the Primitive times, when so great hazards were run upon the professing of it: Few soft spirited men, and lovers of their own ease, but would have found out some fine distinctions, and nice evasions, to have reconciled themselves to the publick Laws, and such things which the Primitive Christians so unanimously refused, when tending to Idolatry and Prophaneness.*

An ordinary Judgement will soon determine, whether party may more plausibly complain of being pressed down with unreasonable prejudices. They that will appear *in the Quality of Dissenters*, must stem the violent Current of prevailing Example, inveterate Custom, whilst others have nothing to do but skull away with the Tide, when it comes in, with the *Celeusma of Queenhithe*, Westward hoe! *Lambeth* hoe! Dissenters must storm the Turn-pikes of Reproach, Poverty, and those more formidable ones of the displeasure of Friends, and wrath of Superiours, smoaking out in Imprisonment, or other penalties, besides the Ecclesiastical Charities of Excommunication: The rest have nothing more to do, but patiently and meekly submit to Preferments and Dignities; And if they can but compass such a measure of self-denial, as to renounce ruine and misery, and rise to such a height of contentment, as to be willing to enter upon Ease and Affluence, the worst is over, and their greatest prejudices conquered.

4. *The last cause of the Distractions and ill Estate of this Church, is the want of true Christian Zeal, and of a deep and serious sense of Piety.* And the *Enquirer wishes that it be not the greatest as well as the last.* And so do I too! for *the want of Zeal for Gods Commands*, makes us so *scalding hot* for *Humane Constitutions*. The want of *such a Zeal* for the Authority of Christ *as a King*, makes us so bold to *Invade his Office*. The want of Zeal for *the Perfection of Scriptures*, makes us so Zealous for *unscriptural Traditions*. The want of Zeal for *the substance*, makes us so Zealous for *Ceremonial shadows*. When all those Spirits, that Holy ardour of Soul, that flame of Affection which ought to be expended in the love of God, and his Law, is evaporated in Airy speculations, contentions for, and impositions of new Inventions.

This Cause is plainly in the number of those, which like the Weathercock, conform to every gust of Wind. It is *Communis furis*, and therefore *the first occupancy* creates a Title.

What was it made the Primitive Church so unanimous that it

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was not crumbled into *parties*, *nor moulded away in Divisions*, *nor quarrelled about Opinions*, *nor separated one part from another*, *upon occasion of little scruples*, but because the *turbulent Spirit* of Imposition was not yet *raised*, nor ambitious domineering over the Faith and Consciences of the Brethren, had not yet got any considerable Head? It's true, there was a spice of this encroaching Humour found amongst the *Judaizing Christians*, who would needs obtrude their Ceremonies upon the Gentile Converts, as necessary to Communion with the Church; but the divinely inspired Apostles were ready at hand to check the growing Evil, and vindicate the Churches from the servitude of *beggarly Rudiments*. It's true, *Diotrephes* his fingers itched to be tampering; but the Beloved Disciple that lay in his Masters Bosom, who was privy to his meek and gracious Temper, and knew how displeasing such imperiousness was to him, gave an early and zealous rebuke to the Attempts and Essays of Prælatical Arrogancy; and indeed he could not but remember, and was concern'd in it, how smartly Christ had snibb'd *Aspiring Church-men*.

That there was so much Tranquility therefore amongst the Primitive Christians, was not that *they were without differing apprehensions*; *for mens parts were no more alike*, *nor their Educations more equal*, *then now*: But because there was a Spirit of Condescension to, and mutual forbearance one of another. *The strong*, either in Knowledge or Authority, did not trample upon the weak; *There was then some diversity of Expressions*, *in which the Pastors of several Churches delivered themselves*, (for there were neither Homilies nor Liturgies) *yet they did not distort themselves into parties*, because they made not their own Sentiments the Test of Orthodoxy, nor their private Faith the publick standard and measure, to which all Christians should be tyed to subscribe; They allowed a latitude in things not fundamental, nor had learned the modern Artifice of Fettering Consciences in the Chains of *Assent and Consent*, to the Dogmats of a prevailing party.

In those days men were sincerely good and devout, *and set their Hearts upon the Main*; *the huge consequence and concern of which*, *easily prevailed with those Holy men*, *to over-look* other mens private Opinions: *They were intent upon that wherein the power of Godliness consisted*, *and upon which the Salvation of Souls depended*; *and so all that was secure*, *they were not so superstitiously concerned for Rituals*, either to practice them, much less to impose them; They would not stake the Churches Peace against Ceremonies, and then play it away rather then not be Gamesters. *They considered that they had all one God*, *one Faith*, *one Baptism*, *one Lord Jesus Christ*; and never insisted upon one Posture, one Gesture, one Garment, one Ceremony: *They*, *Good men! found enough to do to mortifie their Passions*, *to bear their Burdens of Afflictions and Persecution*, *to withstand the temptations of the Devil*, *and the contagion of evil Examples*; And had no strength to spare, nor superfluous time to waste,

waſt, to Conn the Theory of Ceremonies, and practice new devices.

But when men grow cold and indifferent about great things, then they become fervent about the leſſer; when they give over to mind a holy life and heavenly Converſation, then they grow fierce Diſputants for, and rigid Exacters of the full Tale of Ceremonies. Thus when the Scribes and Phariſees became ſo violent for the neceſſity of *waſhing hands*, they little regarded the *cleanſing of their Hearts*; They that will make *things indifferent* to become *neceſſary*, the next news you hear of them is, that they make *things neceſſary* to become *indifferent*: when men *ceaſe to ſtudy their own hearts*, they become very ſtudious how to vex and torment *other mens*; for then they have both leiſure and confidence enough to trample upon *their inferiours*. Then it ſhall be a greater ſin for a Monk to lay aſide his Cowle, then his Chaſtity, and to be a *ſcrupulous Non-conformiſt* to the *Laws of Men*, then a *ſcandalous Non-conformiſt* to the *Laws of God*.

In ſhort (that I may ſay the ſame thing over again, which I have twenty times already ſaid, and that I may convince the Reader that I have read *Eraſmus de (opid) verborum*, as well as his famous piece *of the Art of Preaching*) *Then, and not till then, do the little* Appendices *of Religion grow great and mighty matters in mens eſteem, when the* Eſſentials, *the great and weighty matters, are become little and inconſiderable*; which I had had little need to have mentioned, but for the ſake of thoſe Elegant and Modiſh words, Appendices and Eſſentials, which in an Eloquent Oration ought not to have been forgotten.— *Dixi!*

That there are *Diſtractions* in the Nation, *Diviſions* amongſt Chriſtian Brethren, and a ſeparation from the preſent Church of *England* in various degrees, is evident; *The Induſtry* of our *Enquirer* in Tracing out *the Cauſes* of them, has been very *commendable*, though his ſucceſs has not been *anſwerable*. Had he pleaſed to approve himſelf a skilful and impartial, as well as a *ſerious* Enquirer, he had certainly directed us to one cauſe more, which for want of *Ariadnes* Threed, in the Anfractuous windings of this Labyrinth, he has quite loſt himſelf, and his Travels. Honeſt *Gerſon* of old has notified it to the non-obſerving World, and from him I ſhall recommend it to the Reader.

There can be (ſaith he) *no General Reformation without the Abolitions of ſundry Canons and Statutes, which neither are, nor reaſonably can be obſerved in theſe times, which do nothing but enſnare the Conſciences of men to their endleſs Perdition, no tongue is able to expreſs what evil, what danger and confuſion, the neglect and contempt of the Holy Scripture, (which doubtleſs is ſufficient for the Government of the Church, elſe Chriſt had been an imperfect Lawgiver) and the following of Humane Inventions, hath brought into the Church.* Serm. in die circ. part. 2. 'Tis that which has ever been lamented, and by all moderate perſons complained of: That unneceſſary Impoſitions, have been made the indiſpenſi-

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ble conditions of Church-Communion, without precept or precedent from the Word of God.

To this cauſe had he reduced all our Diviſions, he ſaid more in thoſe *few plain words*, then in all thoſe well coucht periods wherewith he has adorned his Diſcourſe, and darkened Counſel. As *the matter of Law* ariſes out of *the matter of Fact*, ſo the Juſtice of the Non-conformiſts Cauſe, appears from the terms that are put upon them in order to Communion; If the Terms be unjuſt, it will juſtifie their Cauſe; If they have ſinfully managed their Cauſe, its goodneſs will not juſtifie their Perſons; what Diſſenters uſually inſiſt upon for their Juſtification, I ſhall reduce to theſe Heads.

§ 1. They plead, that ſome things are impoſed upon their Faith, tendered to Subſcription, as Articles of Faith, which are either falſe, or at beſt, they have not yet been ſoo happy as to diſcover the truth of them: In *Art.* 20. They are required to ſubſcribe this Doctrine, *The Church hath power to Decree Rites and Ceremonies*; which Clauſe of the Article, as we fear, it has been by ſome indirect means ſhuffled into the Article, it not being found in the Authentick Articles of *Edw.* 6. ſo it proves alſo, that the Terms of Communion have been enlarged ſince the firſt times of the Reformation.

They object alſo againſt that Doctrine in the Rubrick; That *it is certain from the Word of God. That Children Baptized, and dying before the Commiſſion of actual ſins, are undoubtedly ſaved.* The Scripture, the Proteſtant Churches, nor any ſound Reaſon, have yet given them any tolerable ſatisfaction of the Truth of the Doctrine about the *Opus operatum*, of Sacraments: That Doctrine laid down in the Catechiſm; That Children do *perform Faith and Repentance by their ſureties*, is alſo as great a ſtumbling to our Faith, and we cannot get over it: How the Adult ſhould believe and repent for Minors, or Infants Believe and Repent by Proxie, I omit many others.

§ 2. They plead, that they are not ſatisfied in the uſe of any Myſtical Ceremonies in Gods Worſhip, and particularly they judge the uſe of *the Croſs in Baptiſm* to be ſinful: A Sacrament of Divine Inſtitution according to the definition of the Church in her Catechiſm, *is an outward and viſible ſign, of an inward and inviſible Grace given unto us, ordained by Chriſt himſelf, as a means whereby we receive the ſame, and a pledge to aſſure us thereof*: where we have 1. *The matter* of a Sacrament, *An outward and viſible ſign of an inward and ſpiritual Grace*; 2. The *Author* of a Divine Sacrament, *Chriſt himſelf* 3. *The End* of it: to be *a means* to convey the thing ſignified, and *a pledge* to aſſure us of it. Hence it's evident, that it's ſimply impoſſible that any Church ſhould inſtitute a Divine Sacrament, becauſe they cannot give it a Cauſality to thoſe Graces it is inſtituted to ſignifie: Nevertheleſs it's poſſible for Men to inſtitute Humane Sacraments; which ſhall have the *Matter* of a Sacrament, *That is an outward Viſible Sign of an inward Spiritual Grace*; and they

may

may pretend to aſcribe an effect to it alſo *to ſtir up, to excite, or encreaſe Grace and Devotion:* And yet becauſe it wants the right efficient Cauſe, it's no *lawful Sacrament*, though it be an *Humane Sacrament*; Such an inſtitution (ſay they) is the *Sign of the Croſs*. *An outward Viſible Sign of an inward Spiritual Grace. Ordained by Men as a means to effect whatever Man can work by his Ordinance.* Here is the matter without Divine Signature, which is the thing they condemn it for.

3. They plead, that ſince Communion with the Church is ſuſpended, and denyed but upon ſuch Terms as take away Chriſtian Liberty in part, and by conſequence leave all the reſt at Mercy; they dare not accept of Communion upon thoſe Terms: There are ſome things which God has in the general left free and indifferent, to do or not do; yet at ſome times, and in ſome Caſes it may be my great ſin if I ſhould do ſome of them, as when it would wound the Conſcience, and deſtroy the Soul of a weak Chriſtian: If now I ſhall engage my ſelf to the Church, that I will never omit ſuch *an indifferent thing*; and the Soul of that weak Chriſtian ſhould call to me to omit it, I have tyed my Hands by engagement, I cannot help him, though it would ſave his or a thouſand Souls out of Hell, becauſe I have given away my freedom to the Church.

4. They plead, that they ought not to hazard their Souls in one Congregation, if they may more hopefully ſecure them in another; for that their Souls are their greateſt concernment in this World and the next: Now ſay they, there's no Queſtion but Men Preach ſuch as they Print with publick allowance; and therefore they ought to provide better for their Souls elſewhere: Eſpecially they ſay, That the Doctrine of Juſtification is *Articulus ſtantis vel cadentis Eccleſiæ*, an Article with which the Church falls or ſtands: This Article, ſay they, in the Pariſh where we live is quite demoliſh'd by the Doctrine of *Juſtification by Works*; we are bound therefore to provide for our ſafety and depart; and when we are once out, we will adviſe upon another Church, not which is tolerable, but which is moſt eligible, and in all things neareſt the *Word*.

5. They plead, that there's no obligation upon them to own the Churches Power to impoſe new Terms of Communion; unleſs the Church can prove her Power from Chriſt: 'T's not for them to diſprove it; it lies upon her to prove it, and to prove it ſubſtantially too, or elſe it will be hard to prove it their duty to own it.

6. They ſay, the World is peſtered with Diſputes about Worſhip, about Religion; and therefore ſince all cannot be in the right, they are willing to go the ſafeſt way, and Worſhip God according to his Word: If the things diſputed be lawful to be done, let 'em be ſo; they are ſure its lawful to let 'em alone; and they think there's no great hazard in keeping to Scripture Rule, nor can believe that Chriſt will ſend any to Hell, becauſe they did not Worſhip God in an External Mode, more neat and ſpruce then God commanded.

7. They

7. They pretend, that the things impoſed are *parts of Worſhip*, which none can Create but God, nor will God accept of any but ſuch as are of his own Creating; and whether they be *Integral or Eſſential Parts* they do not know, but in the Worſhip of God they find them ſtanding upon even ground, with thoſe that are *certainly Divine*, or at leaſt as high as Man can liſt them.

8. They do not find that God ever commanded the things impoſed, either in general, in ſpecial, or their ſingulars; If God has commanded a Duty to be done, the Church muſt find a place to do it in; but though the Church muſt find a place for the Duty, a time for the Duty, ſhe may not find *new Duty* for the time and place.

9. They are the more cautious of all Ceremonies, becauſe the old Church of *England*, in her *Homilies* Serm. 3. *Of Good Works* tells us: *That ſuch hath been the corrupt inclination of Man, ſuperſtitiouſly given to make New Honouring of God of his own Head and then to have more Affection and Devotion to keep that, then to ſearch out Gods Holy Commandments, and do them.*

10. They ſay, they have read over all the Books that have been written in juſtification of thoſe things, and they find their Arguments ſo weak, their Reaſons ſo futilous, that ſetting aſide Rhetorick and Railing there's nothing in them, but what had been either anſwered by others, or is contradicted by themſelves, which hardens them in their Errour, who are gone aſtray into the right way.

11. They ſay, it's their duty to endeavour a Reformation according to the Word, which if others will not, they cannot help it, and hope they will not be angry with the willing.

PART

PART. II.

CHAP. I.

The several ways for prevention of Church-Divisions mentioned by the Enquirer, *considered. The Papal Methods:* 1. *Keeping the People in Ignorance.* 2. *An infallible Judge.* 3. *Accommodating Religion to the Lusts of Men. Three other ways mentioned by the Enquirer.* 1. *Toleration.* 2. *Comprehension.* 3. *Instruction.*

AS that Person will highly merit of this present Age, whose discerning eye shall discover, and his charity propound to the world such rational expedients, as may amicably compose our present differences, upon terms comporting with the Conscientious principles of the contending parties; so our fears of the success are justly greatned by the frequent disappointment of our hopes; Confident Pretenders posting up their Bills in every Corner, promising nothing less then miracles, but performing nothing more then pretences.

It is some encouragement to expect more then a Palliate Cure from this undertaker, to see him fall to his business so like an Artist: *It cannot be hoped* (says he) *that where the business is Religion, and the concern Eternal Life, that men should incuriously swallow every thing without moving any Question, or stirring any Debate.* To which I subjoin, nor can it be *expected* that when they have moved the Question about the important concerns of Eternity, they should acquiesce in their own Question, without a satisfactory Answer: like that Governour who scorned to surrender before a Gun was shot off, but then thought it enough for his Credit to Capitulate.

Most men swallow their Religion, as the Infant does its Pap, which has no other previous chewing, then what the Nurse gives it: and are driven into Profession just like a stock of Geese with no greater difficulty, then holding over their Heads the Ceremony of a Long Pole. And I will add further, that as this is *not to be hoped* from all: so neither is it *desirable* in any, That they should cease to be *rational Creatures*, before they become *Christians*.

The *Enquirer* had curiously and carefully searched all the Dispensatories, and out of those stores, promises us the choicest Medicines that may fit the Patients Case, and seem most practicable: And we cannot pray for a Physician better qualified, then

then one who is Maſter of many Remedies, and of a judgement to chooſe out thoſe which are agreeable.

The Church of *Rome* has been an old Empirick; ſo noted a Quack, for a deſperate Cure in a deſperate Caſe, that the greateſt civility we can allow her here, is that which we commonly give your Mountebanks; lend them a Hearing, and do as we ſee Cauſe.

She Glories indeed in her Unity and Peace, and it might invite a modeſt curioſity to deſire a ſight of that ſympathetical Powder which has effected ſuch wonders: And to ſatisfie you in one word its nothing but the *Jeſuites Powder*, or a *Great nothing in a Juglers Box*.

1. Her firſt preſcription is Prophylactick, by way of prevention: the beſt of Remedies (no doubt) ſince its more deſirable not to have needed, then having ſo, to have obtained the help of *Aſculapius* And it is nothing more then this plain, cheap, and eaſie *Recipe*. That *the People be kept in profound Ignorance*: Thus when the *Philiſtines* had put out *Sampſons* Eyes, they knew he would make a ſtout Mill-horſe; Thus when the Empreſs *Irene* had plukt out her Sons Eyes, who could ſee, ſhe found it eaſie to ſet up Images which have Eyes, and ſee not. But our *Enquirer* looks upon this preſcription as too ſtrong *a Narcotic*, that *it will not down in* England, though it has done great feats in *Italy* and *Spain*, and the Uniformity of thoſe Nations, is an unqueſtionable Certificate to avouch its excellency. And it's to be feared at preſent it will not: for ſome Learned Men are very confident, that our own Engliſh ſimples are more connatural to Engliſh Bodies, then the exotick Druggs of *Pontus*, and that we have *the true Dictamnum* growing in our own Gardens, had we but skill to uſe and apply it.

But we ever doted upon forreign Novelties, and prize nothing that liberal nature has beſtowed on us; King *Lucius*, the Glory of our Iſland, and the whole world, who firſt ſubmitted his Crown of Gold to one of Thorns, and laid his Scepter at the foot of him who bore a Reed, not well inſtructed in the Riches of his own Dominions, muſt needs ſend to *Rome* for advice; *Eleutherius* good Man, who had not yet learnt how to make all Thrones depend upon his *Infallible Chair*, ſends him this Anſwer, That *there were already in Britain, the Old and the New Teſtament, out of which, by the Council of his Kingdom, he might take a Law to Govern it.* Did *England* know its own ſtrength, it's ſo well furniſht at home, that it might ſpare its Travels, and never croſs the Seas, or climb the Alpes to ſeek new Models of Religion; The *Holy Scriptures being* (as *Lirinenſis* well ſays) *perfect, and abundantly ſufficient for all things, yea and more then ſufficient.* And on this account too there would be leſs need of *Trade and Navigation.*

Two Reaſons there are why our *Enquirer* thinks this Papal *Doſe of Ignorance* will not be admitted in *England*.

§ 1. Becauſe *it comes too late*: Ah! It's thouſand pities that a Re-

a Receipt of such fame should be like, *post mortem Medicina*; but is there no hope left under the lid of *Panora's* Box? The Church is a *successive Body*; and though she may be incurable in her *present Individuals*, yet she may recover, and revive in those of *the next Generation*: The Disease is not *Acute*, but *Chronical*, and there may be some possible room for endeavour. What if a Thousand or two more of the Ministers were silenced? and the labours of as many discouraged and prevented? what if Lectures were proscribed? private Conferences interdicted? and your *Twicers* suspended? If it performed all that may be desired, it might effect more then could be hoped: Oh no! *It comes too late!* for *the People of* England *know so much already, that the only way to Cure the inconveniencies of that is to let them know more*: This is excellent indeed, when the *Potion* becomes its own *Antidote*, and *Death* proves its own *Cure*, which but in *one only Case*, the amazed world *never yet saw*, and will hardly yet *believe*; but thus they tell us of Quicksilver, that *a little Dose* will certainly kill, when a great one will Cure the twisting of the Guts, and those *Intestine* Dissentions which thence arise in the Bowels: yet so it is: A little knowledge *only ferments* the natural pride of the Heart, which a round Quantity would wipe off, and carry away: or to express it more elegantly from our Authour: *When men know a little, they conceit they understand all that's knowable, and hereupon refuse instruction, and oppose their private Opinions to the publick Wisdom: whereas, did these Men see further into things, they would then discover a reason, of many things they are now dissatisfied with, or at least distrust their own Understandings, and grow modest and peaceable.* It becomes every good Christian, and good Suject, (and he that is really the former, will certainly be the latter) to suspect the shallowness of his own judgement, and to Revere the depth of his Governours Wisdom; he may be an useful *Mariner*, that is no skilful *Pilot*, nor knows how to steer the publick bottom; but I do not remember that we have been discoursing about the expediency of *the transporting of Wool*, the making of War or Peace, or the mysteries of Government, *Quæ supra nos, nihil ad nos*; but our business is Religion, and the direct and immediate concerns of another Life: and how to Cure the Pride of the Understanding without putting out *its Eye*, and making it a *Polyphemus*: And here, though I suspect not the shallowness of the Governours Judgement, I dare not Act against my own. I confess my self to seek in the great secret of *a private and publick Wisdom*, as much as I am in that of *the private and publick Conscience*, a superstructure raised upon that foundation: Nor have I learnt the difference between *the Roman Ignorance*, and resigning *my own Reason*, between darkness, and no use of Light; between having *no private Reason*, and renouncing it for the *publick Reason* in things directly respecting God and his Worship: The one is *born blind*, and the other has *lost his Eyes*; the one is the *Romish Opiate*, and the other a more gentle; (if more gentle) *preparation of Laudanum*.

§ 2. He

§ 2. He answers Secondly. *If it had come timely, yet the Remedy is worse then the Distaste, we esteem it better if one be necessary, to use like men, then to be driven like Beasts, or Acted like Puppets*: An Heroick Spirit! and such as may assure us, that our Physician will not cast us into *a Lethargie*, to prevent the Ravings of *a Feaver*; and that he will not follow that Bishops Method, who had no other Cure for *the Head-ake*, then to *cut it off*.

I have read of a *King of France*, who was extreamly delighted in a Gentleman of his Bed-chamber, who had the proper Case of a Man, but his upper Rooms it seems, were but furnisht like Cock-lofts, with Lumber; This young Courtier by some accident, took an occasion to fall into a Phrensie, which elevating his Brain above its natural and dull temper, to a due height requisite for Raptures, created him *ex tempore*, a most accomplisht Poet: Physicians are all summon'd, and they summon their Art to restore him to his former little self; success attends their Endeavours, and the Gentleman is at once delivered from his Distraction, and that greater madness, Poetry: The King having lost the satisfaction he conceived in his Airy Fancies, and valuing a Mad *Virtuoso* before a sober *Dogger-head*, threatens to hang 'em up every Mothers Son, unless they did presently recover him again to *Wit*, by putting him *besides it*: such Mountebanks there are in the World, who cannot *keep Men peaceable, unless they make them Stocks and Stones*.

2. A second Remedy for Divisions much used by the *Romanists*, is their *Infallible Judge*, to which, whosoever pretends on this side a Deity, needs only his own mouth to confute him; what follows in our *Enquirer* I read with much complacency *The Scripture plainly tells us that* all men are lyars, *such as may deceive, or be deceived; and most undoubtedly would never have made such a distinction of Christians*, as strong men, and Babes in Christ, *nor made it our duty to consider one anothers weakness, and practise mutual forbearance, if it had intended any where to direct us to such an Umpire; as should have ended all differences, and made all men equally certain*. Much less, that *the weak in judgement* should be forced to keep pace with the strong in their practises; or that Babes should drive at the rate of grown men: Again, *There was* (says he) *a time when the Apostles had the assistance of the Holy Spirit, in such a manner as to guide them into all Truth, and gave miraculous proof that they had so, and yet this would not cure all the Schisms, nor resolve all the Scruples, nor silence all Disputes*. It must needs therefore seem unreasonable for them, who confessing a fallibility of judgement, should yet as peremptorily bind their Decretals upon the Consciences, as if they not only pretended to, but could give evidence of their infallibility: It's noted for one of the impudent Essays of Papal presumption and Hypocrisie, that he calls himself, *Servus Servorum Dei*, and yet Acts as if he were *Rex Regum, & Dominus Dominantium*. I never liked Jacobs *smooth voice*, when I felt *Esau's rough hands*, and heavy Fists:

Fifts: when we hear of the *Publick Wisdom and Conscience*, and both fallible; and yet like *Moses* his Rod, swallowing up *the private Wisdom and Conscience*, because they are fallible, I rejoyce in the great Advantage of an Infallible God, who guides us by an *Infallible Rule*, to whom we may securely commit our Souls.

Nor can I see the so much boasted preheminence of their *Infallible visible Judge*, above our certainly *Infallible Rule*; for whatever this *Infallible Gentleman* determines, it must come to our Cognizance either *by word or writing*, and then it amounts to no more then an *Infallible Rule*, and by consequence, lyable to mis-interpretations, and all the inconveniencies which they have unjustly charged upon *the Word of God*: which has been confirmed to us by *Autopsy*; for whatever have been his Determinations *De fide*, the Contenders retain their former sentiments, which they protest they would never do, were they assured in the true meaning of his Decrees.

Here I began first to suspect that this *second part of the Enquiries* could not possibly be the Child of the same Father with *the former*: For *that other Enquirer* assured us, that *in the Primitive times, All good men were of one way, and All bad men of another: that there was but one division of men*; that ἀγαθοὶ & κακοὶ, *were the only Sects that the World was known by*; but *this Enquirer* tells us, That there were *Schismes, Divisions, Scruples, Disputes* in those early days, which *the Holy Spirit given to the Apostles in such a manner as to lead them into all Truth, would not Cure, resolve, nor silence.*

Had the Apostles understood those frightful consequences which we have learnt to impute to diversities of judgement in lesser matters, with suitable variety in practise attending it, they might easily have silenced those disputes by the interposition of their Authority; and the Churches no doubt would as easily have acquiesced in the judgement of the Apostles, who could give irrefragable proof that they were sent of Christ.

Nor have these rigorous Decisions ever reacht their pretended ends, in healing differences, but only consopited them under the Ashes for a while, or taught men a little more craft to draw over the Articles to their *private Opinions*, rather then conform *these to the publick belief.*

Another Papal Remedy, is *the Accommodation of Religion to the Lusts and Interests of Men*, allowing them to think, believe, do any thing in the world, provided they be subject to the *universal Pastor*: for the Pope seeing that the World will not be brought over to him *upon the Terms of Christ*, is content to come over to the world *in Morals*, if they will but come over to him in *his Ceremonials.* Much what of the same good nature with that other grand Impostor *Mahomet*, who when that *sullen Mountain* would not stir a foot to come to him, very courteously answer'd, *Then let us go to the Mountain.*

Whether this Prescription will be agreeable to, or practicable upon

upon Engliſh Conſtitutions, is a great Queſtion; *The Author of this Second part*, concludes that *we of this Church have too much ſimplicity and ſincerity of Devotion to make uſe of this Remedy to put an end to our Diſtractions.* And yet I find ſome have been tampering with it; who will be very ſtrait laced in Ceremonies to gratifie the ſuperſtitious, and widen the moral part to humour the voluptuous: Thus if *mens Luſts* will not bend to the ſtrait *Rule of the Word*, they can gently bow *the Rule* to their *corruptions and crooked propenſities*: And the Author of *the former part* ſeeing well that Men are grown too Purſey to be crambt up with the Religious obſervation of the *Lords-day*, has prudently accommodated the day to their latitude; They that have no great mind to keep *a Chriſtian Holy day*, ſhall need but to call it *a Judaical Sabbath*, and they are well fortified againſt all the checks of their Conſciences. I know the Reader will pitty him that muſt contend with two ſuch Adverſaries, (*Hercules* himſelf would not engage a couple; but though they be *Two*, they have but one ſingle *weapon*.

We want not ſome who can reconcile the levity of the Stage and Theatre, to the gravity and ſeverity of the Chriſtian Doctrine; that can teach men by their writings or practice, how they may retain theſe vanities, and never throw off their *Baptiſmal Livery*; and it is upon good Advice: for ſhould they loſe ſuch numbers from the party, it would make a filthy Hole in it; and the weeding out ſuch Tares would make a thin Field of Corn; and therefore ſome plead that they ought to *grow together till the Harveſt*.

4. We are now come to *the great and infallible Remedy*, which the Pope truſts more to, then his *great Infallibility*; But there are conſiderable diverſities about the form of this Medicine in the Diſpenſatories: ſome (as Mr. *Neceſſity Bays*) expreſs it by a tedious Periphraſis, *Axes, Halters, Racks, Fire, Faggot*, with an *Et cætera*, which has more in't then all the reſt; but the *Romaniſts*, who are *conciſe men*, and love ſhort work, and to expreſs *multum in parvo*, have Epitomiz'd all in that *one word*, *the Holy Inquiſition*, ſo called by the ſame *Catachreſis*, by which we call our former Antagoniſt, *the Compaſſionate Enquirer*.

If you enquire a Reaſon of this *various reading*; know that it ariſes from *the diffevent Copies* of the *Diſpenſatories*: The *Pharmacopœia* of *London* calls it one thing, that of *Rome* Another; the Titles differ, but the Medicine is the ſame, only *Rome*, according to her old overdoing and undoing Humour, has added a few drops of the Spirits of Vitriol; And yet the laſt Edition of ours at *the Old Bayly*, re-aſſumes its former Title, and calls it downright, *The Inquiſition of* Spain.

This Medicine is truly *Soveraign*; it has the *Probatum* of thouſands who *being dead yet ſpeak*, its anſwerableneſs to its primitive deſign, to ſilence all diſputes, and ſtop the mouth of all gain-ſayers; when all is done, there's no Argument convinces ſo effectually as *Stone-dead*; The wild-Iriſh themſelves will

believe their Enemy to be dead, when his Head lies sever'd a Yard from his body; But the Question will be still, *whether it will down with English-men?* for though they have good *Beef Stomacks*, they want that of the Ostrich to digest Axes and Halters: There's no Question but it will *go down* well enough with them that *give it*, but it needs the assistance of much Rhetorick to perswade them into a willingness of mind, who are to take this wallowish potion: If we could agree who should be persecuted, there are enow could be content to be the persecutors, and this is one of the greatest Quarrels.

That the Genius of this Nation (as our *Enquirer* informs us) is so *courageous*, and withal so *compassionate*, I am very glad to hear; the one part so *tender hearted* that they will *not inflict*, the other so *tender Conscienced* that they will endure what shall be so inflicted, rather then prostitute them to the lust and tyranny of men; but then I must conclude, that some of our Church men, are either *no English-men*, *or no Christians*, whose tender mercies have been Cruelties, and whose compassions like *Draco's* Laws written in blood; And I rejoyce to meet with these concluding words: *The exercise of so much cruelty upon the Account of Religion in Q. Maries days hath made that profession detestable to this day, and it looked so ill in the Romanists, that we shall never be perswaded to practise it our selves:* Had we but now an exact *Definition of Cruelty*, we should soon be satisfied whether the *Enquirer* would not perswade Another to it, if not be perswaded to it himself.

None of the *Romanists* Expedients then will work this blessed Cure, they are either *Impracticable*, or *come too late*, or are *worse then the Disease*, or one mischief or another. There are therefore three others, which he will mention, *Universal Toleration, Comprehension*, and *Instruction and Consideration*

1. The first is *Universal Toleration*. But here the *Doctors Man*, whom he sent a *simpling*, was horribly mistaken. And like *Elisha's Servant* whom he sent to gather good *wholesome Pot-herbs*, has imprudently pickt up your *poysonous Colequintida*; An oversight that might have lost the Patient his Life.

Universal Toleration? I have observed English Spirits to bear some secret Antipathy to these Universals; They like not either Universal Bishop, nor Universal Monarch, nor Universal Grace, nor Universal Admission, nor this Universal Toleration. But what if he had omitted *This Universal* in the Receipt? There may be a Toleration of what is Tolerable; whatever disturbs not the publick Peace; whatever contradicts not the Scriptures, the Creeds, whatever crosses not the great ends of Religion, whatever is peaceable, holy, humble, just, modest, righteous, though perhaps *not Ceremonious*: This Corrected Toleration has been given with Admirable success in the primitive and purer times; It fills up both pages in the Apologies of *Justin Martyr*, *Athenagoras*, and *Tertullian*, who pleaded for a Toleration of their Innocent profession: It is the main ingredient in that famous

Mass

Mass of *Pillula sine quibus esse nolo*, nay of *Pillula sine quibus esse nequeo*. The *Scripture* (said the *Enquirer* just before) *has made it our Duty to consider one anothers weakness, and practice mutual forbearance*: and what forbearance is without Toleration I do not understand. Had the Imposing Spirit obtained in the Infancy of the Church, they had saved the Heathens a labour, and destroyed each other; He might safely therefore in his Irenicon have used from *a Scruple to a drachm* of this Toleration; 'Tis the Herb *Gratia Dei*, the great *fraenum cholerae*, which Addulces the blood, begets good Spirits, restrains surley Humours, and sweetens the Tempers of one Christian towards another.

'Tis not the opening *a Pantheon*, but *not shutting up the Temple of* the one true God; not a licentiousness to blaspheme, but a liberty to glorifie our Redeemer that we plead for; 'tis a privilege that every one has a claim to, That the Lives and Souls of them that have not wronged their Country may be secure in it: *If the works of the flesh* be found amongst us, *Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanness, Lasciviousness, Idolatry, Witchcraft, Hatred, Variance, Emulation, Bitterness, Strife, Seditions, Heresies, Envyings, Murders, Drunkenness, Revellings, and such like.* We plead not for the guilty; only let the innocent *find mercy* at home, who in other places might expect a *Reward*. Is he a meet person to undertake the Healing of our Breaches, to compose our differences, that cannot distinguish between *a Toleration in Ceremonies*, and the *Tolerating of Idolatry*? that knows not the nice difference between Tolerating every thing and nothing? If it be all one to Indulge in things confessed Adiaphorous at best, and the necessary duties of the Decalogue, talk no more of Healing; He must prove *a Physician of no value*, that when *the balm of Gilead* drops into his mouth, knows not how to Apply it.

2. The second propounded Remedy, is an excellent *Opener*, known to this present age by the name of *Comprehension*, which in our Authors Glossary signifies, *The making the Terms of Communion more free and easie, opening the Arms of the Church, to receive more into her Bosom, thereby to enlarge both the Society and Interest of the Church*: and one would think that so much Reason coucht in so few words, might have vindicated the Receipt above contempt, and recommended it to a *probationary experiment*; self-preservation would make a harsher medicine then this go merrily down; If any thing make a Building strong, that must be carried to such a vast Height, that must bear such a weight, that shall be exposed to such shaking Winds, it must be a proportionable widening the foundation: But let us hear our Betters.

§ 1. *For my part* (says he) *If such a Course please our Governours, I have no mind to oppose any thing to it.* They are infinitely obliged to him, surely, that if they please to shew kindness to tender Conscienced Subjects, he will *not oppose*, not declare against them. This is a Moderation far beyond Mr. *Bayes*'s hotter temper; he will tell them: *If they will Rule, they must, they*

muſt, they muſt, — but is this all? I had thought he had brought with him *Licentiam ad practicandum*, A Commiſſion to preſcribe, and now I ſee he can do nothing without *the Colledge*: but what now if ſuch a wholeſome courſe *pleaſe not*, though it *profit*, might it not have become *a Compaſſionate Enquirer*, to have forwarded them with a humble Hint or two of their interwoven *Intereſt and Duty*? when he preaches ſo admirably upon thoſe points of *Reverence*, *Contentment*, *Submiſſion*, *Charity*, and has ſhewn his skill in the Theory, does he uſe to Rivet it no better then thus? If theſe virtues pleaſe my Auditors, *I have no mind to oppoſe*; If you will be *chartiable*, you may for all me, I'le promiſe you I ſhall never ſtudy your ruine, and plot your deſtruction. If Church-Governours *pleaſe to enlarge the Society and Intereſt of the Church*; If they pleaſe to *ſtrengthen it againſt its Enemies abroad*, and procure it *peace and contentment at home*, he will *not oppoſe*: The beſt natur'd man that ever was in the World!

They who are Governours of the Church, are bound in Conſcience to make *the Terms of Communion eaſie and free*; not to make the Yoke heavier then Chriſt made it. They that came in eaſily, ought to let others in upon the ſame Terms: whoever they were that firſt clogg'd the Churches Communion with multitudes of unneceſſary Conditions, are like him that receiving a clear Eſtate of Inheritance from his Father, leaves it encumbred, and charged to his Son, who perhaps may never be able to take off the Mortgage, and ſo ſhall thank his Father for juſt nothing: Chriſt made the way to Heaven narrow enough, and there's no need to make it ſtraiter: Governours in the Church may eaſily miſtake in the Quantity of their power, but this is ſure. How great ſoever it be, they have all *for Edification, none for Deſtruction*. They ought not to reject thoſe whom Chriſt will receive; And a little plain Engliſh would here have done no hurt, but have been Acceptable to the beſt of Church-men, whoſe miſery it is, to have *many flatterers* about them which let them know *their virtues*, but few faithful *Monitors*, who will acquaint them with *their Duty*.

§ 2. *He deſires it may be Conſidered, that there are many things that look very probably in the general notion and ſpeculation, that would flatter one into a great opinion of them, which when they come to be tryed, are no ways anſwerable*: Therefore never attempt any thing that wears the Appearance of Honourable to the Worlds end; the benefits may poſſibly exceed, as well as fall below expectation. It was *Davids* counſel to *Solomon*, *Up, and be doing, and the Lord be with thee*! There are many things which in the generalnotion and ſpeculation would terrifie one with appearances of Inconveniencies, which when they come to be tryed, were the ſuggeſtions of Cowardice. Thus Children in the Twilight, ſeeing every object through the ſpectacles of their own fears, make that *a Bear*, which Nature calls *a harmleſs Buſh*.

§ 3. *But many difficulties occur in the Reducing things of this Nature*

ture into practise; that were *not foreseen in the Theory*; And many blessings and mercies may and will occur, which will overweigh the difficultes in attaining them: the difficulties *momentany*, the advantages *perpetual*; the inconveniencies *personal*, the benefits *general*, the prejudices to some few mens *too much plenty*, the Advantages to *many mens Souls*. It's a strange resolution, that we will not *endeavour* to be happy, for fear we should encounter *a difficulty* in the way thither; If the knot cannot be untied, *Alexanders* Sword will cut it, to withdraw from Apparent Duty, for fear of uncertain danger, is but like his, that would not shoot the Bridge, because it might possibly fall on's Head. Those accidents which can neither be foreseen nor prevented in doing a good work, are by wise men not to be regarded: I never hear such Arguments used against the Attemps for preferments: I shall judge them real in their Declamations against Comprehensions, when they use to discourage themselves from the same Difficulties in *seeking great things for themselves*. The Sluggard cries out, *There's a Lion in the way*, when it's nothing but his own lazie Soul, that paints out dread and terrour to his Imagination: let none *hereafter eat*, because he may possibly *find his death*, where he *sought his life*: let none *Travel*, because he may be robb'd, nor ride on Horseback, because he may possibly *get a fall*: There's nothing truly Glorious, but must be waded to through difficulties, but some secret Lusts commonly pretend them greater then they are.

§ 4. *This is not done*, (says he) *and we do not know when it will be set about*. That is, we will use *the means* when *the end is effected*: How happy had the Christian World been, if the first Imposers of Ceremonies had acted by those principles: such conditions are not imposed, and we know not when they will therefore we will never begin: But though it be not yet done, I know when it will be: When God shall open the Eyes of Church men to see the things that belong to their Duty, and the Curches peace; when all our totterings and shakings, shall have humbled us into more Condescension and Evangelical tenderness; When men shall see it both their Interest and Duty to secure the Building by enlarging the foundation; and that the security and stability of Society, lies in the Close Union of the parts, that the Beauty of a Church consists much in the amplifying of the fold; Then will something of this nature be done, for which all generations shall call the Authors Blessed.

3. If then none of these Remedies be practicable, what must the languishingh Patient do? There is yet one thing more, which is like those Cordials we use to drop into the Mouths of the dying to procure the old admired *ἐυθυμία*, and that is *Instruction or Information*. It's pitty the poor Clinical Church should dye under so many hands, and in the view of a whole shop of Medicines, and therefore rather this then *nothing*, which that it may be effectual, it will be necessary to consider, 1. Who are meet to give. 2. Who ought to receive Instruction. 3. From

what grounds the instructions are to be fetcht. 4. What other means may possibly be administred.

§ 1. It's very considerable who are to be the *Instructors*, and called into the Consultation? for every one would be in the Chair, and none willing to be Auditors. The Brethren of the Episcopal perswasion having got the priviledge of Law, take it for granted that they are the only persons meet for this service; whereas, if the Doctrine, Worship, and Discipline of the Dissenters, should prove nearer to the prescript of Scripture, no subsequent Law can possibly set it further off: That which was better before the Ordinance of Man, cannot be made worse by it; Let therefore neither the one nor the other be the Instructers, but let the Word of God Instruct both: And this was the expedient of *Constantine* the Great at the opening the Council of *Nice*; He did not turn the Scale by his Authority; but delivers himself thus impartially to the wrangling factions. *All seditious Contention set aside* (says he) *let us discuss the things in Controversie by the testimony of the divinely inspired Scriptures*, as we are informed from the *Cath. Modcrator*: And it was *Austin's* great reserve when he was pressed with the inartificial Argument of Authority, *Ne audiamur hæc verba, Ergo dico & tu dicis, sed quid dicit Dominus. Tell not me what you say*; any more then I tell you what *I say*, but let us both hearken to *what God shall speak*, Quod enim (*as Hierom*) de sacris Scripturis non habet authoritatem eâdem facilitate, contemnitur, quâ proponitur; *What-soever is not grounded upon the Scriptures, may with as much ease be slighted as 'tis urged.*

§ 2. Its material too, *who are to be instructed?* It's presumed by our *Enquirer*, that the Dissenters alone want a word of Advice, they only are Crooked; but whatever they want, as they will submit to, and be thankful for wholesome Counsel, so they conceive a word of Instruction will be necessary *another way*. When the Non-conformists are come to *the End of their* Tedder, when Conscience will suffer them to Advance not one step further. Others will need an Use of Instruction too, to go to *the End of theirs*: such Instruction as this of our *Enquirers*. The Creditor can give his Debtor whom he laid fast in *Ludgate*: *Truly Friend! You have been reputed a discreet person, I wonder at you, and if do all that know you, that you will be so little a Friend to your ease, so obstinate against liberty, as to lye freezing your self in a smoakie hole, you ought to submit your private judgement to that of the generality of mankind, who with one voice agree, that the fresh Air is much sweeter then this nasty Lodging!* How much more proper had it been to have expostulated with this *Cruel Creditor*, Sir! The poor man has paid you all he has, he is not worth a groat more in all the world, you may have his skin, but flesh he has none, shew now your Charity, and since he cannot release himself, but you may, shew your Charity. The Dissenters say this is their Case: they cannot come up to the propounded conditions without sin, the Imposers may abate of the Conditions without

out sin, and therefore they are the proper Subjects of Instruction: Indeed I find the Non-conformists very shy in charging the Terms to be sinful; they are loath to speak a word that may be interpreted any reflection upon the Church, and therefore commonly insist upon other pleas: but when Importunity shall extort it from them, they must deal liquidly, and assert, that they *cannot do these things, and sin against God thereby.*

§ 3. From what grounds will this Instructer draw his Instructions? I do the rather propound it, because I meet with great variety of them: some say, *Master, save they self*; and to this they answer, *my Soul is my self*, and if *the Soul be lost, the man is lost.* Others cry, oh be very tender of *Peace!* and they reply, yes, and a little of *Truth* too. Others exclaim, you will *bring in Popery!* And they return, we did not make the Terms of Communion; They that speak thus, are more Zealous to keep *us out* than *Popery*: The Arguments then must be drawn from such heads as are agreeable to the fixed Scripture principles of those that come under Instruction. Otherwise the Advice is no more but this: Come over to our party, and there will be Peace! why, so there will (reply the Dissenters) if you come all over to ours, or to any third party. There would be a Peace, an ill Cemented, ill grounded one; and such, as upon every occasion would break out in a more desperate Rupture.

§ 4. It's very considerable what this Gentleman will do, if his Instruction should prove Addle; For if neither *a well Buttressed Toleration*, cramped down soundly with wholesome Laws, nor yet a *due Comprehension* will be admitted; The condition of Dissenters would yet be supportable, if they might be kept to this wholesome *Kitchin Physick of Instruction*: But his Instructions look very like those of *Spain*, who use to exhort and instruct the poor wretches caught in the Iron Claws of the Inquisition; to be pittiful to their Souls, not to throw away their Lives, and presently shut up their last words with *the flames.* What the Operation of this Instruction may be, I cannot tell; but the Dissenters I perceive have their last propositions sent in, and the next is *Escalado*; for he tells us, p. 214. *That if they will not be instructed, he sees no Obligation upon the Magistrate to forbear to make or execute such Laws as he apprehends for the good of his Government*: so that after all his experiments, and great shew of skill in healing, he is wheeled about to that last, and worst of *Papal Remedies*, which some call *Axes, Halters, Gibbets, Racks, Pillories, Imprisonment*, others *the Holy Inquisition*; which is just the plea of the Papists for all their Barbarities: *That if the People will not be perswaded, they see no Reason why the Church should not deliver them over to the secular powers to be burnt for Heretick.*

CHAP. II.

The Enquirers notion of Schiſm examined, and as Applyed to the ſober Non-conformiſts, proved uncharitable, unjuſt and falſe.

Schiſm is an *Eccleſiaſtical Culverine*, which being *over-charged, and ill managed*, Recoyles, and hurts the Canoneer. He that undertakes to play this great Gun, had need be very Curious, and careful to ſponge his Canon Well, leſt it *fire at home*. Nothing has more naturally tempted the Imprudent to account *nothing* to be Schiſm, then that ſome haſty angry men have made *every thing* ſo.

That *cauſeleſs ſeparation* from *a particular Church* of Chriſt, whereof we were once *duly Members*, is a ſin of a deep dye, is owned by all that own the Goſpel, and have any tender regard to the proſperity of the Church, or propagation of the Truth, but yet we ought not to be ſo eaſily credulous, as to believe *every departure* to be that *heinous thing*, which paſſionate men, in hot blood, out of prejudice to the perſons of others, or a neceſſity to ſecure and eſtabliſh their own Acquiſts over mens Conſciences, are reſolved to call ſo.

It was not therefore *lightly*, but with *great judgement*, that the learned *Hales* calls it, *one of thoſe Theological Scarcrows, with which they who uſe to uphold a party in Religion, uſe to fright ſuch as making any enquiry into it, are ready to Relinquiſh and oppoſe it, if it appear either erroneous or ſuſpicious.*

St. *Cyprian* (it ſeems) *affirms it to be of ſo horrible a Guilt, that Martyrdom was not a ſufficient Expiation of it.* And upon the like occaſion, he might have ſaid as much *of any other ſin*, for I have not learnt, that *Martyrdom* was deſign'd to *expiate our ſins*, but to *bear witneſs to Gods Truths*: And the ſame *Cyprian* at another time will inform us, that *Plebs obſequens præceptis Dominicis, & Deum metuens à peccatore præpoſito ſeparare ſe debet. A people fearing God, and Conſcientiouſly obſequious to his Commands*, (not only may, but) *ought to ſeparate it ſelf from a ſcandalous and wicked Paſtor.* And therefore we may ſecure our ſelves, *that ſuch ſeparation* (in his judgement) is not *That Schiſm* which *Martyrdom will not expiate.*

The true reaſon why *ſeparation* in the Scripture, and purer Primitive times, was eſteemed *a Crime ſo unpardonable*, was, becauſe the Church made no other Terms of enjoying her Communion, then Chriſt had made: That Superiours durſt not venture the Churches Peace upon ſuch a ſandy foundation, as her *own Inventions*, turned into *Impoſitions*: for if the Terms of Communion be of *Mans making*, the ſeparation that enſues will be but *a Schiſm of mans making* too, and whether a Church has firſt a power

power to *make a sin*, and then to make it *damnable*. I have some reason to question.

Let nothing be declared *Schism*, but what the Scriptures have made so, and we shall be content it be made *as great a sin* as he can reasonably desire.

Had not our *Enquirer* been carried down in the torrent of his own overflowing Eloquence, till he had quite lost himself, he might have answered himself from his own words, p. 209. *For this cause* (says he) *it pleased God that his Church, in those early days, should rather be harassed with persecutions, which made it unite it self the closer, and paring off all superfluities, keep to the necessary and essential Doctrines delivered to it, then to be softned, and made wanton by ease, and so to corrupt the simplicity of the Gospel*: Let a Church then return to *the simplicity of the Gospel*: Let her repent of that *softness and wantonness of Spirit*, which *by Ease* she has contracted. Let her *pare off all superfluities*, and keep close to *the necessary and essential Doctrines delivered to it*, and she shall find us as ready to write *Philippics* against *Schism* as himself, though we want his *Ciceronian* quill, and wordie excellencies.

Now though we are all convinced that Schism (*veri nominis*) is a most detestable Impiety; yet to beget in us a greater aversation from it, it may be profitable to listen to his reasonings, which are so potent, as will doubtless drain both the Conventicles and the Theatres.

§ 1. *None* (says he) *can doubt of this, who considers what care our Saviour took to prevent it, what pains he took with his Apostles that they might be throughly instructed, and not differ in the delivery of his mind to the World.* We do with all humble thankfulness own the faithfulness of our Saviour in *instructing*, and the Carefulness of the Apostles in *following their instructions*. They delivered to the Churches, as *the whole Counsel of God*, Acts 20. 27. so, *only the Counsel of God*; 1 Cor. 11. 23. *I have received of the Lord that which I also delivered unto you*; And let but the Pastors of the Church imitate these patterns, *keep exactly to their instructions* from the Lord Christ, which we doubt not are proportionable to reach the ends of Unity and Peace, (else they had not been *sufficiently instructed*) and either we shall have *no separations*; or the case will be so plain; the *separation* so evidently *Schism*; that the Schismaticks shall not be able to obtend the least umbrage to cover their gross prevarication: But when Embassadors *throughly instructed in all the means to prevent* that evil, shall go beyond their Instructions, and impose *new, unheard of Terms* of Communion, which never came into his heart to approve, nor ever came out of his mouth to impose, give me leave to say thus far, they are *not Embassadors*, and by consequence, *a Noncompliance* with them therein, cannot be interpreted *any affront*, but *faithfulness* to him who entrusted them with those dispatches: And if Christs instructions given to his Apostles to prevent this growing evil were *insufficient*, I am afraid they will be but sorrily helpt out, who have recourse to men for *fuller instructions*,

§ 2. To prove the greatneſs of this ſin, he *obſerves* (and we thank him for the obſervation) *that the Apoſtles were induſtrious to reſiſt all beginnings of Schiſm in every Church, to heal all breaches, to take away all occaſions of Diviſion, to unite all hearts, and reconcile all minds*: and to requite his kindneſs, I will repay his obſervation with this other; that they either are not the *Apoſtles Succeſſors* in their healing Spirit, or elſe have ſeen ſome weighty reaſon to depart from their judgement about *the hainouſneſs of that ſin*, who inſtead of taking away *the occaſions of Diviſions*, which they have given: or removing *the ſtumbling Blocks* out of the way of Union, which they have laid, do give greater to, and lay more obſtacles before the Chriſtian world.

§ 3. His third proof is taken from *the lovelineſs of Unity*. *It's not* (ſays he) *the ſublimity of Chriſtian Doctrine, nor the glorioufneſs of the Hopes it propounds, that will ſo recommend it to the opinion and eſteem of beholders, as when it ſhall be ſaid*, Ecce ut Chriſtiani Amant: *when they ſhall obſerve the Love, Concord, and Unanimity amongſt the Profeſſors of it*. The *Enquirer* has here ſtumbled at unawares upon *the formal reaſon of Schiſm*, or *ſinful ſeparation*, which lies not in the variety of Opinions, or differing practices, modes or forms of Worſhip, but in a want of *true love and charity*: That which renders Chriſtianity truly beautiful and amiable in the Eyes of Beholders, is, that it teaches the Profeſſors thereof to love one another with a *pure heart fervently*, though under different perſwaſions, as to Modes of Divine Worſhip and Diſcipline; That their hearts are larger to receive one anothers perſons, then their heads are to conceive one anothers notions. But yet, as he is a fond Lover that chuſes his Wife *by the Eye*, for the ſymmetry of her external frame, or *cloathing of wrought Gold*, rather then thoſe virtues which adorn the Soul; ſo he that chuſes his Religion *by Senſe, and not by Faith*, will make a moſt lamentable bargain; He that falls in love with Chriſts Church upon External Allurements and Extrinſick Motives, will either repent, or quit his choice when ſhe is perſecuted, her outward frame diſcompoſed, her order violated, *the Shepherd ſmitten, and the Sheep ſcatter'd*; whereas, he that eſpouſes Religion for thoſe Inviſible glories which ſhe propounds, and keeps in his ſteady eye *the recompence of reward*, will adhere to his choice when ſhe is *moſt black*, and *the Sun of Perſecution* has too familiarly *looked upon her*.

But I ſhall not need to trouble my ſelf, or the Reader, with any more of theſe fine Arguments; *Schiſm is an evil*, whether he be angry at it or no. And ſeparation *may be good*, whether he be pleaſed or no: All the Queſtion will be, that ſeeing there is an apparent ſeparation found amongſt us from the Political Church of *England*, and ſuppoſing that there is ſin one where or other, where the guilt of it ought to lye! The *Enquirer* has ſpoken a great deal of Truth in in a few words, *That ſome have found pleaſure to get that Child, which they would by no means have laid at their own doors. A ſucceſsful piece of Villany* it is, which ſometimes paſſes

for

for *a virtue*, for the Fathers who have begot theſe Brats, to expoſe them to be kept and maintained at the coſt of the poor innocent Pariſh. And if we might gueſs at the true Father by the Childs Phyſiognomy: All the diviſions which have ſo heavily charged the Churches, having ſprung from Ceremonies, from needleſs Impoſitions, from unneceſſary Terms of Communion; They who take ſuch pleaſure to *beget them*; may be preſumed to have been *the Grand-fathers of the other*.

If yet there be any controverſie depending whoſe the Child is: The *Enquirer* recommends to us the Wiſdom of *Solomon*, for diſcovering *the True Mother*, and becauſe we know, *Partus ſequitur ventrem*, if we can once find out the Damm, we ſhall make her confeſs the Sire: *It was the early proof* (ſays he) Solomon *gave of his Wiſdom in diſcovering the true Mother of the living Child, to which both the Litigants laid equal claim*—I confeſs his illuſtration proceeds hitherto but very oddly, for *there*, the quarrel was, who ſhould have the Child, and be reputed the true Mother but *with us*, all the controverſie is who ſhall be diſcharg'd of it: but all ſimilitudes do not run of four Legs, and it's very well if this will hop on one: obſerve how he lays both ends of his diſcourſe together: *As that wiſe Prince diſcovered the true Mother by the tenderneſs of her Bowels towards the Infant, ſo we may perhaps diſcover the true Children of the Church by their reſpect and tenderneſs to her.* Ay; juſt ſo no doubt! Even as the Wheelbarrow rumbles over the Pebbles, ſo a Thumb-rope of Sand, will make an excellent Cable for Fiſhers folly; The compariſon would run a little more naturally and regularly thus. As the true Mother was diſcerned by the tenderneſs of her Bowels towards the Infant, who would rather part with her right, then that her bleeding Eye ſhould ever ſee her Child divided, ſo we may perhaps diſcover the true Mother of the Church, by her condeſcending and relenting pity, who would rather wave her claims, and reſign her right in ſome leſſer inſtances, then ever endure to ſee the body of Chriſt divided by a Schiſmatical Dichotomy. And as the Harlot, notwithſtanding all her pretences, bewrayed her ſelf to the diſcerning eye of that Judicious Prince, who could be content the Child ſhould rather dye, then ſhe loſe her moyety, ſo will ſhe evidence her ſelf to be a Stepmother Church, which peremptorily inſiſts upon a pretended right to Impoſe, at the Peril of the Churches Peace, rather then by waving thoſe pretences, ſave the endangered Church from imminent deſtruction: but ſome mens Allegories are never ſo excellent, as when they are impertinent, or non-ſenſe; and I preſume he found this Alluſion in *the Wiſdom of Solomon*, in the *Apocryphal Writings*.

We are come at length to the Queſtion, what is *the true notion of Schiſm?* A point that deſerves to be handled with the greateſt exactneſs; for upon the True ſtating hereof, the iſſue of the whole controverſie depends. His notion, or definition of Schiſm, is this. *Schiſm is a voluntary departure or ſeparation of ones ſelf, without*

just cause given, from that Christian Church, whereof he was once a Member: Or, *Schism is a breach of that Communion wherein a man might have continued without sin.* I shall not need to find faults, or pick holes in this definition, they will offer themselves as he opens the Terms, only I observe, (1) That it offends against one of the sacred Laws of Definition, which ought to be most religiously and inviolably preserved. *Definitiones debent cum Definito reciprocari*; The *Definition ought to be convertible with the thing defined*: And that *this is not so*, is evident, because there may be *a Schism where there is no separation from External Communion*: There is a Schism *in a Church*, as wel as *from a Church*. The Churches Garment may be *rent*, and yet not rent *in two*: Thus the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 11. 18. *When ye come together in the Church, I hear there are Divisions amongst you*: ἀκούω σχίσματα ἐν ὑμῖν ὑπάρχειν, ch. 12. v. 25. *That there may be no Schism in the body*, ἵνα μὴ ᾖ σχίσμα ἐν τῷ σώματι. That Definition which is as narrow as *his Charity*, and leaves out those who ought to be taken in, must necessarily be stark naught. (2) This definition is very short, in expressing that which is indeed *the Poison and Venom, the formal Reason of all Schismatical departure*, viz. the want of *Charity*, and *true Evangelical Love*; for he that departs from a Society, yet loves the real Christians therein, and the Society it self, so far as it is a Church of Christs institution, only he loves his own Soul with a more intense love, and accordingly makes the best provision for it he can, and would rejoyce that others would accept of the same advantages, ought not to be called a Schismatick; but if they who pretend to a power to stamp what significations they please upon words, will call him so, the best is, no Nick-names will prejudice him in the sight of that God, who searcheth the heart, and tryeth the reins. As Heresie is opposed to *the Faith*, so Schism is opposed to *Love*; and Heresie and Schism are distinguisht by those things to which each of them is opposed.

3. It's faulty for its ambiguity: because he tells us not what the *Christian Church* is, from whence the departure must be made to denominate it Schismatical: If he means *a particular Congregation* united under its proper Pastor according to the Laws of Christ, it will prove it Schismatical to depart from a Church of Non-conformists. If he understands a National Church, he should do well to prove, that such a Church is of *Christs institution*; but I shall wave these and many more, till he has discanted upon the particulars of his own Definition.

§ 1. *I call it* (says he) *a departure or separation from the Society of the Church, to distinguish it from other sins, which though they are breaches of the Laws of our Religion, and consequently of the Church, yet are not a renunciation of the Society. There may be such a person, who for his wickedness deserves to be cast out of the Church as being a scandal and dishonour to it, yet neither separating himself, nor being cast out of the Society, remains still a Member of it.* This is indeed too true, And hence it is, that many Churches

ches are ſo over-run with ſcandalous Debauchez, that there's very little difference between the impaled Garden, and the wide Wilderneſs: And perhaps was there more of this *Authorative ſeparation*, there would be leſs of that prudential ſeparation: If rotten and gangreened Members were cut off, the ſound would not have that neceſſity to provide for their own ſecurity; If the Contagion were not ſo Epidemical, there were leſs need to ſeek out for better and more wholeſome Airs: when an Impudent Blaſphemer, who out-faces the Sun, the Notoriety of whoſe Crime needs no Dilator, ſhall yet quietly maintain his ſtation in a Church, whilſt others for not coming up to a Ceremony, ſhall be rejected, though otherwiſe holy and inoffenſive, men may make Models and Idea's of Schiſm to ſave their Credits long enough, before they will be much regarded.

§ 2. *I call it* (ſays he) *a voluntary ſeparation to diſtinguiſh it from puniſhment, or Schiſm from Excommunication.* Yes, but he ought to have called it *Voluntary* upon a higher account, in oppoſition to ſuch departure as is made with *regret and reluctancy*: for when a ſincere Chriſtian has uſed all due means to inform himſelf of the Truth of *ſuch a principle*, or the lawfulneſs of *ſuch a practice* as may be made the Conditions of Communion with that Society; when he has asked advice of God in his word, when he has pray'd with *David*, that God would *open his Eyes*, when he has conferred with the moſt judicious and impartial Chriſtians, when he has humbly and modeſtly repreſented to the Paſtors and Governours of that Church, the ſuſpected Condition, or the innovation crept into the Church, and yet can neither procure Reformation of the abuſe, nor toleration of his particular non-complyance, nor yet find ſatisfaction of the lawfulneſs of ſuch practice, he may without guilt withdraw himſelf from that Society; nor ought this to be charged upon him as *a departure, having in it any thing of ſinful voluntarineſs*: when a Merchant throws his Lading over-board to preſerve Life, I grant that he may be ſaid *willingly* to throw it away, becauſe his precious life preponderates and turns the Scale of the will, yet none will condemn that poor Merchant of *too little affection* to his Merchandiſe. Thus when a Chriſtian can find no reſt, no ſatisfaction to his Conſcience from thoſe *ſuſpected Conditions*, which in the conſtant exerciſe of his Communion do recur, and ſhall recede from that Society, joyning himſelf to another, where with full ſatisfaction of ſpirit he may purſue his own Edification, ſuch a one ought not to be charged with *a voluntary departure*, nor ſhall it be charged upon him as ſuch in the judgement of him that ſhall judge the World.

§ 3. *I call it* (ſays he) *a departure from a particular Church, or from a part of the viſible Church, to diſtinguiſh it from Apoſtacy, which is a caſting of the whole Religion, the name and profeſſion of Chriſtianity*: But here his definition is very Crazie, and ill joynted: for it ought to be defined *a departure from a particular Church of Chriſt*, to diſtinguiſh it from *ſuch a Conſtitution*, as is either

no particular Church of Christs institution, or none, *so far as the separation is made from it*: such a one as is not united under *Christs Officers*, nor conjoyned by *Christs Ligaments*: Christ has taken special care that there may be *no Schism in the Body*, 1 Cor. 12. 25. And for this end he has commanded *a spirit of mutual forbearance and condescension*; he has mingled and temper'd the body together with such exact geometrical proportion, that each of the parts may care for the other; for this end also he has instituted some *extraordinary Officers*, whose work and Office, was to cease with the present exigency and occasion, and the ordinary, whose Office and Employment (as the Reasons of them) were to be perpetual. Now if any Society of Men, calling themselves a Church (and in the main respects being really so) retaining the great Doctrines of Christianity, and such Ordinances whereby Salvation is attainable, shall yet put it self under other Officers then Christ has appointed, and practise other Ordinances then he has instituted, and make Communion with her impracticable, without submitting to such Officers, such Ordinances; *separation from that Society*, can be *no separation from a particular Church of Christ*: Because, though they may be such a Church in the main, yet *so far* as the separation is made, they are *not so*: And *they deny* Communion with them, *so far* as they *are a Church of Christ*; because of non-submission to them, so far as they are *not a Church of Christ*.

§ 4. *I add* (says he) *those words* — whereof he was once a Member, *because Schism imports division, and making two of that which was but one before*. So that if an Act was made to divide some of our greater Parishes (which are much larger then some of the Primitive Dioceses) into Two, under their distinct Pastors, this must be a Schism, according to this famous definition; for here is, 1. A voluntary departure, 2. From a particular Church, 3. whereof once they were all Members; and wherein 4. they might all have continued without sin.

But the most considerable thing here will be, how I became a Member of that Church, from which the departure is supposed to be made; for 1. To be *forced into a Church*, will never make me such a Member, but that I may re-assume my liberty and right when *the force is removed*; Violence and Constraint unite me no otherwise to a Church, then *a great Beetle unites a Wedge to a Tree*; which though it may by main strength be driven into the Tree, yet not being engrafted into it, no Union is created with it, nor does it derive any nourishing juices from it. 2. *Baptism alone* will not do it: because as I conceive, that Ordinance solemnly unites me only to *the Catholick visible Church*, and not to a particular Congregation; otherwise, whenever the providence of God shall transplant me into *another particular Church*, I must be *re-baptized*, and so as often as I remove, because *as to that Church* I am *unbaptized*. 3. Nor will my being born and bred within national limits and precincts, denominate me a Member of such National Church or Constitution, because it passes for a Current Maxime, That *the Church is in the Commonwealth*,

wealth, and therefore *Church and Kingdom*; *Church-member and Subject* are not Terms of equal extent and demensions. And besides, there are many Congregations of Christians in this Nation, not syncretizing with *the National Policy*, who yet are not stigmatized with the Brand of Schismatical, but without the least reproach of Schism Worship God, and exercise Discipline according to their own private and peculiar Laws. 4. Therefore to make me a Member of a particular Church, there must be the concurrence of my own free choice, which whether it ought to be signified by express and overt Acts, or that an implicite and tacite consent may not suffice, is here no season to discourse.

§ 5. *But the only difficulty* (I am sure the greatest) is, that which he subjoins in these words — *An unnecessary separation, or without just cause, or to separate from that Society wherein I may continue without sin.* Two extreams there are it seems.

1. Of *The Zealots of the Church of* Rome, *who scarcely allow any thing as a sufficient cause of separation*: But I look on this as a very unjust surmise of the *Romanists*; for their most rigid Zealots will *in Thesi* allow *sinful conditions, imposed* for a just ground of *sinless departure*, only they deny to individuals *a judgement of discretion* to determine each for himself of *the sinfulness of the Condition*; And thus what they seem to give with *the right hand*, they take away with *the left*: And herein our *Enquirer* is as strait laced as they; for though in the general he will prodigally allow us, *that sinful Impositions* are a just plea for separation, yet he has forestalled that concession all along with a fine contrivance; That *our private Wisdom* must lower the Top-sale to *the publick*. Thus p. 64. *Since the peace of the Church often depends upon such points as Salvation does not, and since in many of those, every man is not a Competent judge, but must either be in danger of being deceived himself, and of troubling others, one of necessity must trust some body else wiser then himself*; so that the matter according to this Gentlemans *Hypothesis*, is just as long as 'tis broad; but that the Church of *Rome* speaks that with open Mouth, which he delivers between the Teeth.

2. The other supposed extream is, that of some Protestants, *who make the Causes of separation as many, and as light as the Jews did of Divorce, almost for any matter whatsoever: But as our Saviour, when the case was put, found out a middle way betwixt Divorce for no cause at all, and for every cause, so ought it to be done in this business of Schism.*

Reader! we are now in a hopeful way for the compromising all the Controversies that have vext our Northern Climate, and to seal general Releases of all Actions, and causes of Actions against each other, from the beginning of the Reformation, to the day of the Date of these presents: for as we may charitably presume of all our *Episcopal Brethren*, that they will stand to the final award of so great an undertaker as our *Enquirer*, so I am confident I may engage for all the *dissenting Brethren*, that

that they will abide by the Umpirage of *Jesus Christ*; and that whatever expedient he used in deriding the grand Question *about Divorce*, shall conclude them in all their Debates *about Schism*: Now the final Decision of that affair we find, *Mat.* 19. 8. where our Saviour considers not what could plead *inveterate Custom*, or *a gray headed practise* to abet its pretensions, he slights all the Arguments from *laudable Examples*, and the *Traditions of their Forefathers*, and runs up the practise *to its Primitive Institution*; and tells them, *From the Beginning it was not so.* And indeed if a Transcript be blotted or blurr'd, we presently have recourse to the Original, and from thence redintegrate whatever the hungry worm, or greedy Moth has defaced: when the Streams are muddied and polluted, we relieve our selves from the Spring, where the Virgin, and unpolluted waters, flow cleerest and sweetest, without adulterate mixtures. It was the cry in the Council of *Nice*, Αρχαία ἤθη κρατείτω, and we cry the same one and all, Let the terms of Comunion in the first plantation of the Gospel Church be produced, and he that will not subscribe, and submit to those *Archetypes*, let him be branded for an obstinate Schismatick.

Now therefore if ever our *Enquirer* promises himself and us, that he will *Hit the mark*; *I say then, and then only, is there just cause of separation, when perseverance in the Communion of such a Church cannot be without sin, that is, when she shall impose such Laws and Terms of Society, as cannot be submitted to, without apparent breach of the Divine Law.* Thus he says! And if I should tell the Reader, I say the contrary, we should make a squabble on't, to render our selves ridiculous; let it therefore neither be what I say, nor what he says, but what wiser men then us both say, who may be presumed more impartial in their Judgements, wherein they vindicate the Dissenters, because they were, or are eminent Members of this Church. And first I will present him with the judgement of Mr. *Hales*, a Person of whom the Church of *England* has great cause to boast. Now amongst many other things to our purpose, in his *Treatise of Schism*, he acquaints us; 1. That *when either false or uncertain conclusions are obtruded for Truth, or Acts either unlawful or ministring just scruple, are required of us to be performed; in these cases, consent were Conspiracy, and open Contestation, is not Faction or Schism, but due Christian Animosity.* 2. That *nothing absolves men from the guilt of Schism, but true and unpretended Conscience.* Therefore such a Conscience will absolve from the guilt of it. 3. That *where the Cause of Schism is necessary, there not he that separates, but he that is the Cause of the separation is the Schismatick.* 4. That *to require the execution of some unlawful or suspected act, is a just cause of refusing Communion; for not only in Reason, but in Religion too, that Maxime admits of no Release*, , Cautissimi cujusque præceptum, quod dubitas ne feceris. 5. That *it hath been the common Disease of Christians from the beginning, not to content themselves with that measure of Faith which God and Scriptures have expressly afforded, but out of a vain*

vain desire to know more then is revealed, they have attempted to devise things, of which we have no Light neither from Reason nor Revelation; neither have they rested here, but upon pretence of Church Authority (which is none) or Tradition, (which for the most part is but feigned) they have peremptorily concluded, and confidently imposed upon others a necessity of entertaining conclusions of that nature. 6. To *lead our publick forms with the private fancies upon which we differ, is the most Soveraign way to perpetuate Schism unto the worlds end. Prayer, Confession, Thanksgiving, Reading of Scriptures, Administration of Sacraments in the plainest and the simplest manner, were matter enough to furnish out a sufficient Liturgie, though nothing, either of private Opinion, or of Church pomp, of Garments, or prescribed gestures, of Imagery, of Musick, of matter concerning the Dead, of many superfluities which creep into the Church, under the name of Order and Decency, did interpose it self. To charge Churches and Liturgies with things unnecessary, was the first beginning of all superstition.* 7. That *no occasion hath produced more frequent, more continuous, more sanguineous Schisms, then* Episcopal *Ambition hath done.* 8. That *they do but Abuse themselves and others, that would perswade us, that Bishops, by Christs institution have any superiority over other men, further then that of Reverence: or that any Bishop is superiour to another, further then positive order agreed upon amongst Christians, hath prescribed.* 9. In *times of manifest corruptions and persecutions wherein Religious assembling is dangerous; Private Meetings howsoevr, besides publick Order, are not onely lawful, but they are of necessity and duty: All pious Assemblies in times of Persecution and Corruption, however practised, are indeed, or rather Alone the lawful Congregations, And publick Assemblies, though according to form of Law, are indeed nothing else but Riots and Conventicles, if they be stained with Corruption and Superstition.*

There is one person more, whom, since he has quoted *Incognito* for an excellent person, I will the rather recommend to his consideration. *Irenic.* p. 109. where speaking of the private Christian, he says; *He is bound to adhere to that Church, which appears most to retain the Evangelical purity.* And p. 116. *He is bound to break off from that Society which enjoyns a mixture of some Corruptions as to practise:* One word from Dr. *Jackson*, chap. 14. of the Church: where he acquits those of the Schism which withdraw from what Church which imposeth Rites and Customs, that cross the Rule of Faith and Charity. Bishop *Bramhall's* Testimony will pass for sterling, p. 7, 8. of Schism: *When there is a mutual division of two parts, or members of the mystical Body of Christ one from the other, yet both retaining* Communion with the *universal Church*, , quamcunque partem amplexus fueris Schismaticus non Audies, quippe quod universa Ecclesia neutram damnavit: *Which side soever you close with, you shall not be reproacht for a Schismatick, because the universal Church hat condemned neither side:* And he plainly tells us, p. 101. *That it was not the erroneous Opinions of the Church of* Rome, *but the obtruding them by Laws upon other Churches that warranted a separation.*

Next

Next we will hear a word from the Learned Lord *Verulam*, 'Tis *a sign* (says he) *of exasperation to condemn the contrary part as a Sect*; *yea, and some indiscreet persons have been bold in open preaching, to use dishonourable and derogatory speeches and censures of the Churches abroad, and that so far, as that some of our men (as I have heard) ordained in forreign parts, have been pronounced no lawful Ministers*, — And further; *let us remember, that the ancient and true bounds of Unity, are* one Faith, one Baptism, *and not* one Ceremony, one Policy; *and endeavour to comprehend that saying*, , Differentia Rituum, commendat unitatem Doctrinæ: *Christs Coat was indeed without Seam; yet the Churches Garment was of divers Colours.*

Amongst all these, we must not forget that noble and gallant Person the Lord *Falkland*, *A little search will find them*, (He speaks of no little ones) *to have been the destruction of Unity, under pretence of Uniformity*; to have *brought in superstition and scandal under Titles of Reverence and Decency, to have slacked the strictness of Unity, which was between us, and those of our own Religion beyond the Seas.*

Socrates, lib. 5. cap. 21. tells us, that in his time *there could scarcely be found two Churches that used the same forms of prayer.* In *France*, the Ritual of *Paris* differ'd from that of *Anjou*, and in *England* we had our Devotions *secundum usum* Sarum, & *secundum usum* Bangor; and yet the one never reproacht the other for Sectaris or Schismaticks; I am confident therefore to assert it, That neither the Wit nor Malice of man can prove him a Schismatick, who maintaining *Evangelical Love* towards, and holding the substantial Doctrines owned by the Church of *England*, shall either out of choice, or necessity, transplant himself from under the spreading shadow of a Goodly Cathedral, to a Parochial Church, and yet the one has its *Organs*, Adoration towards the *East*, *and Altar*, Adoration at the *Naming of Jesus*, with multitudes of Rites and Observances, unknown to the Villages, and far more differing from the Parochial Usages and Customs, then the Worship of most Country Towns differ from that of the *Non-conformists*.

After all this, I shall throw up the Authority of these great names, and give him full scope for his Rational Abilities, to prove his proposition, when I have first noted those few things.

§ 1. He requires *an apparent breach of the Divine Law*, as the only thing that can excuse *separation* from the *guilt of Schism*: but will not a *real breach* of the Divine Law serve the turn, unless it be *so apparent* as he can desire. I perswade my self, God never yet spoke so loud, that they who have barracadoed their Ears with prejudice, will hear him: nor ever yet wrote so plain, that they will see his mind, whose Eyes Interest has sealed up: And what if it be an *apparent breach* of the Divine Law in the sincere judgement *of him that separates*; must he never discharge his Duty, till he can perswade all the world to see theirs, and pursue it.

§§. Who

§ § Who shall be *Judge*, whether the Imposed Terms contain *an apparent breach of the Divine Law*? and such as will justifie a separation? Mr. *Hales* indeed tells us, *It's a point of no great depth or difficulty*; but yet *the true solution of it, carries fire in the Tail of it; for it brings with it a piece of Doctrine which is seldom pleasing to Superiours.* But were it not that men hate *chargeable Truth* more then *cheap Errour*, and love *cheap Corruptions* beyond *costly Reformation*, there could be no great difficulty who should be judge in this case: For 1. Who may more justly challange a Liberty to judge *what is sin*, then he that must be damned *if he do sin*: He that sins at another's Command will hardly perswade him to be his substitute in the Condemnation, nor will God accept him for the sinners proxy. 2. If the Church must judge; Then though her terms be *the most apparent violations of the Divine Law*, yet there can never be any *lawful separation*, unless we can Imagine her *so modest*, as to *confess* a sin, and yet at the same time, so *immodest* as to *impose* it. To *acknowledge* her Terms *sinful*, and yet with the same breath to enjoyn them as necessary to Communion.

It will be pretended, that the same Inconveniencies will follow *the other way*: for if a particular person who withdraws, must judge, then let the Terms be *perfectly innocent*, yet to be sure, he will plead, that they are *sinful*; unless we can suppose him *so modest*, as to *confess* himself a Schismatick; and yet at the same time *so immodest*, as to persevere in his Schism. But I conceive that this arguing is very wide: 1. Because every Mans Soul lies at stake, and it cannot be imagined that he should either not study its Interest, or that understanding it, he should not endeavour to secure it: I speak of such as are *otherwise Conscientious*; for if he be a person vitious, and profligate, one eaten up of wickedness, we ought not to flatter our selves with any great hopes of the impartiality of his determinations: And if he have thus debauched his Conscience, the Laws are open; The Magistrate who has his power from *the Moral Law*, has by the same Law sufficient Authority to coerce by punishments, whatever Enormities are committed against it. 2. We have no Reason to suppose any Man to be a Hypocrite in the matter of separation, which is attended with so mamy dreadful penalties, unless notorious evidence will warrant such a Judgement.

§ 3. A *rational suspicion of a breach of the Divine Law* is enough in the Apostles judgement to justifie the suspension of my own Act; and if it prove no other then a thing indifferent in it self, yet such dissatisfaction will excuse from sin: for so the Apostle, Rom. 14. 5. *Let every man be fully perswaded in his own mind.* 14. *To him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean*, 23. *He that doubteth, is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of Faith; for whatsoever is not of Faith is sin.*

The *Enquirer* has all this while stood like the very picture of Modesty, equally placed between the two extreams of *All separation*,

ration, and *no ſeparation*: have but a little patience, and you ſhall ſee how manfully he will behave himſelf againſt them both.

1. For the poor *Romaniſts*, he gives them a ſmall pat with his Foot, and they are ſilenced for ever. *It's plain* (ſays he) *it can be no ſin to ſeparate, when it's a ſin to Communicate* Yes very plain it is! but ſo ſay *the Diſſenters*. It can be no ſin *for us* to ſeparate, when it's a ſin to communicate: Ay but (ſays he) It was *an apparent breach of the Divine Law* upon which we ſeparated *from Rome*. Why ſo ſay the Diſſenters: It's an apparent breach of the Divine Law, upon which we ſeparated from the Church of *England*. Ay but (will he ſay) you ought to have *truſted wiſer men then your ſelves*, and not like the *Antipodes*, to have run upon your heads: Oh! but then comes in the *Romaniſts*, and falls upon his bones: *You ought to have truſted wiſer men then your ſelves*, your Superiours in the Church, from whom you ſeparated, and not have ran upon your own heads: Nay replies he, but we have *a judgement of Diſcretion*, and ought to be *Maſters of our own Reaſon*, ſo far as to take *Cognizance of our own Acts*: Well! The *Non-conformiſts* catches that word by the end, before it be well out of his Mouth; We are for *a judgement of Diſcretion* too, and ought ſo far to be Maſters of our own Reaſons, as not to Act againſt them; nothing can be returned that I can foreſee, but that it is not for ſuch pitiful ſneaks as *the Diſſenters*, to talk of *Conſcience, and a judgement of diſcretion*, its enough for *the Gendarms of Reaſon* to make uſe of that plea againſt *Rome*. But I will leave him to ſquabble it out with the *Romiſh* Synagogue.

2. He has quickly (you ſee) ſhaken them their foddering; but theſe cumberſome Fanaticks ſtick as cloſe to him as a Burr, and therefore he muſt now give them a rattle.

It's plain (ſays he) *that Schiſm being ſo great a ſin, and of ſo extream bad Conſequences, that which muſt acquit me of the guilt of it in my ſeparation, can be nothing leſſe then an equal danger on the other hand, and that when I may perſevere without ſin, it muſt of neceſſity be a ſin to ſeparate upon inferior diſlikes.* This looks pretty well at firſt but for a few Inconveniences in the Argument.

1. That he begs the whole Queſtion at a Clap, the queſtion was *whether the Impoſition of ſuch Laws and Terms of Society as cannot be ſubmitted to without apparent breach of the divine Law be the only juſt cauſe of ſeparation?* He affirms it, and for proof gives us this, that Schiſm *being ſo great a ſin that which muſt acquit me of the Guilt of it in my ſeparation, muſt be equal danger of ſinning*: wherein he ſuppoſeth *that all ſeparation is Schiſm, where there is not equal danger of ſinning that is of an apparent breach of the divine Law, which is but the queſtion it ſelf a little diſguiſed* to make it more paſſable to the unwary Reader; the truth is, *Schiſm is ſo great a ſin that no danger of ſinning whatſoever* can acquit me of it, for I do not know that any thing will compound for *uncharitableneſs*, for *pride*, for *obſtinacy*, but *ſeparation* for the benefit of all Gods Ordinances, that I may be edifyed and built up

up in the moſt holy faith, but nothing of the nature of the *abominable* ſin in it. 2. Diſſenters will anſwer, that *the danger of ſinning is more clear and evident* when I act *againſt my Conſcience*, then in ſeparating peaceably and modeſtly from a particular Church: for it cannot be lawful in any Caſe to act againſt my light, but it may be lawful in *ſome Caſes* to *ſeparate from a particular Church*: there is leſſe danger of ſin in breaking a humane conſtitution, whitch ('tis at leaſt) queſtionable whether man has power to enjoyn, then of violating the dictate of my own reaſon informed by all the means I can uſe from the word of God. 3. Non-conformiſts ſay, that they ought not to ſeparate, but when non-ſeparation is ſinful, but then they ſay, that non-ſeparation may be ſinful upon other accounts then the apparent breach of the divine Law made the terms of entring into, or continuing in communion: for, ſay they, it is our ſin, if a Church retains ſome corroptions in it, which *prejudice edification*, and ſhe ſhall reſolve never to make any alteration in her worſhip, or diſcipline, nor make any further progreſs towards a through Reformation, not to provide for my ſelf elſewhere, and having opportunity, I ſin if I take not, accept not the advantage which providence offers me, and wherein the word warrants me.

And yet he wonders that *any doubt ſhould be admitted in this Caſe*. Let me adviſe him to beware of Exceſſive wonderment: they ſay, it will make a man as lean as a rake: but whats the Cauſe of his admiration? Why ſome think to waſh their hands of the Imputation of Schiſm upon other terms as namely; *if a Church ſhall not require ſuch terms of Communion as are Expreſly ſinful, yet if ſhe ſhall require indifferent unneceſſary or at moſt ſuſpected things that in this caſe there is enough to Excuſe the perſon that ſhall ſeparate from a participation of this ſin*. There are ſome no doubt of that judgment: and when I have prælibated a few things, he ſhall have his full blow at them.

§ 1. That when they joyn iſſue upon this point, 'tis not becauſe they are ſatisfyed that the things required unto Communion as *the antecedent conditions* of it, or to be practiſed in communion as the *matter of* it are indifferent *in their uſe and application*, for they are ready to maintain it upon equal laws, before equal Judges, that they are ſinful in their uſe, antecedent to their impoſition, but the true reaſons why they uſe this place, are. 1. Ex abundanti thinking that their very outworks are impregnable againſt his batteries. 2. Out of reſpect to this Church which they highly honour, and reverence her too much then to charge her flatly with ſinful impoſitions; and therefore do offer this ſtate of the queſtion, and are hardly capable of ſo much incivility to ſo conſiderable a body, and ſo great a part of the viſible Catholick Church, unleſs the importunity of ſome modeſt men did extort that anſwer from them. 3. They doubt whether ſome Churchmen will be Maſters of ſo much patience as to bear freedome though temperateneſs of ſpeech, which is abſolutely neceſſary to the managing the Controverſy when thus ſtated:

and

and have reason to fear that some who provoke them to assert the *sinfulness of the terms*, will make such an Assertion an unpardonable sin, not to be expiated without, if with Martyrdom.

§ 2. When he states the question about things *suspected to be sinful*, I hope he will give them the common civility to draw up their own plea in their own terms, and to Explane what they mean by *suspected things* in the question: because they are not compelled to maintain Every proposition which he in his well known charity shall obtrude upon them: A practise then may be taken upon suspicion of sinfulness two wayes, *first upon light slighty, trivial grounds of suspicion*, which have no weight, with a serious and rational Considerer: Or 2dly, upon *violent presumptions*, such as may stagger a person of good judgment and diligence: and 'tis these that they are willing to argue it with him; whether if a Church shall impose such things as the terms of Communion with her, as have, or do, or may puzzle judicious persons about their Lawfulness, and cannot clear it up to their Consciences that they are Lawful, yet they may not forbear Communion in this Case.

§ 3. They desire the same justice in Explaning themselves about the term *indifferent*: *A thing may be indifferent in its own nature*, which is not so *in its use*, as applyed to and practised in the Immediate worship and service of God; If the things under debate be found upon diligent search to remain indifferent, after they are vested with all their circumstances in Gods Worship, they have no quarrel against them that I know of; but if they be only indifferent in their own *general nature*, they desire to be Excused if they dare not admit the consequence, that therefore they must needs be so when *used in Gods worship*, and then made the *terms of Communion*.

§ 4. Unnecessary things may be either such as are *absolutely* unnecessary, or such as are *hypothetically* so, some things that are not *absolutely* and in themselves necessary, yet may become necessary *pro hic & nunc*, even antecedent to the interposition of the Churches Authority; And Dissenters say that what ever the Church shall impose ought to be necessary, *either in it self, or by concurrent Circumstances*, which when they shall conspire together, may be by a Lawful Authority Enjoyned *pro tempore*, that is so long as such necessity shall continue, which when once removed the things ought to return into their *former Classis of Indifferents*.

§ 5. When they deny the Churches power of imposing things *Expresly sinful*, they deny also a power of imposing things *sinful by just consequence*; They judge many things *sinful* which are not forbidden, κατὰ τὸ ῥητὸν, in the Scriptures, and many things duties which are not *Litterally and Syllabically* commanded in the Scriptures: They say not that the *sign of the Crosse* was ever by name prohibited: but they say there are undoubted maximes laid down in the word, from which it will undeniably follow that in its present station in the Church it is sinful; And now he

may

may when he pleaſes ſpeak his three things, which if they be pertinent and *proved as ſtrongly as they are ſpoken confidently, I am content.*

(1.) His *firſt ſay* conſiſts of a *Conceſſion* and an *Aſſertion.*

§ 1. *His Conceſſion*, I *willingly acknowledge that ſuch a Church as ſhall ſtudiouſly or carelеſly clog her communion with unneceſſary, burdenſom and ſuſpected conditions, is very highly to blame*, that is, *the ſins*; but that it became not him to tell her ſo; and then I will venture to ſay a few words alſo. 1. If it be *the Churches* ſin to command *unneceſſary burdenſom ſuſpect Conditions*: It cannot be my duty to obey; A Church may poſſibly ſin in the *manner of her Command*, and yet I *not ſin* in doing the *matter of the Command*, but when *the ſins in the Enjoyning*, I cannot conceive how it ſhould be *my ſin not to give obedience*; for I look upon my *duty* as the *reſult* of the Churches *Authority*, and wherein ſhe has *no Authority* it will be impoſſible to find a *foundation* upon which to build *my duty*: All Offices of Juſtice ariſe from that relation wherein he that *claims* and he that *yields ſubjection* ſtand to each other: And where there's *no relation*, there can be *no relative duty*: now in this caſe before us where the Church has no *power* to command, nay *where ſhe ſins*, if *ſhe commands*, ſo far ſhe is *none*, *of my ſuperior*; and therefore ſo far the *relation* is none, and by conſequence the *duty* juſt as much. 2. If the *Church be to blame* highly, nay *very highly to blame*, that clogs her Communion with theſe *burdenſom* things, then we may preſume *ſhe ſins*, for who ſhall dare to aſſume ſo much freedom as to *blame* her, unleſs ſhe *tranſgreſs the Law of her God?* If then ſhe have ſinned and tranſgreſſed ſome Law of God, it muſt be ſome negative precept, *thou ſhalt not impoſe burdenſom things*; for it is a principle our *Enquirer* will not ſell for Gold: *That what ever is not forbidden, is Lawful*; If then God had not *forbidden* her to impoſe ſuch burdenſom things, ſhe could not ſin, or be to blame in ſo doing (according to his principles) now ſay I, the ſame God that has prohibited the Churches Impoſition of, has alſo prohibited *my ſubjection to burdenſom conditions*: And let this Gentleman produce his Scriptures for the one; and I will drop texts with him for the other when he pleaſes; Thus we are commanded, 1 Cor. 7. 23. *not to be the ſervants of men*: not only *bought with a price*, and ſet free once, but commanded to *aſſert that freedom*, and 5. Gal. 1. *to ſtand faſt in that liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made us free, and not again to be entangled with the yoke of bondage*; Now if ever theſe Scriptures do us any ſervice, or be of any uſe, it muſt be in this particular, that I am obliged not to take a burden and cumber upon my ſoul, at his hands who has *no authority* to impoſe it: If then a Church ſhall clog her Communion with burdenſom things, ſhe is to blame, ſhe ſins, and I am not bound to obey, and therefore my departure can be no Schiſm, I mean no Schiſm but one of *mans creating*; 3. If a Church ſin in clogging her Communion with things which without

out crime or fraud are *suspected of sin* upon such grounds as are allowed just and ponderous in other cases, then it cannot be my sin to separate: for the Church sins in commanding, and I should sin against the authority of God in my conscience in doing what I really upon *Strong presumptions* judge to be sinful, though it were not commanded: And now one would think it could be no such meritorious work, no act so acceptable to God to persevere in the Comunion of a Church, when she sins in commanding, and I sin in obeying suspected conditions.

§ 2. We come now to his Assertion notwithstanding all this, which he has granted he will fetch it back again, if it be possible, and we shall gain nothing by any thing he gives us, and there are also two parts of his Assertion. 1. The negative part; *'Tis not burdensomness, nor every light suspicion of sin that can justifie any separation*; concerning the *burdensomness* we have spoken somewhat before; yet a word or two about the suspicion; *'tis not a light*, or however *not every light suspicion* that is but like the *dust of the ballance* that will do it: really it was cunningly fenced! He expects perhaps that we should assert every light suspicion that weighs no more then a feather should be enough to justifie a separation; Ay; but there are *violent presumption*, which they say in some cases are admitted for good evidence. If I meet a person coming out of the house in a great rage with a bloody sword in his hand, and Immediately I enter in and find a person lying in his blood, I do assure you I shall not condemn my self for *lightness of belief*, or *easiness of entertaining suspicions*; if I suspect the man I met to have been the *murderer*; *light suspicions* may be as easily shook of as fastened on, and contemned as tendered: but it becomes no wise man to act against these *strong presumptions* of sin, which the Dissenters have of the imposed terms of Communion; And it will appear they are such as may make a hardy resolute person stand and pause before he rushes upon the practise: 1. They are sure that Christ is the perfect and therefore the only Lawgiver of his Church: had he not been the former, there had been no pretence he should be the *later*: Now seeing these terms of Communion, are Laws *imposed* upon the Church; they seem to impeach his wisedome that he saw not the fittest terms for his Churches to hold Communion upon, they do reproach his care that he has not left laws enough for his Church, and they seem to invade his Authority without any warrant: all which things are enough to raise a suspicion (at least) of good strength in a wisemans breast, which none but a hardy spirit would act against.

2. They are sure that some of these conditions have been occasioned by and used in and with, and are suited and accommodated to the *grossest Idolatry* that ever was in the world, and is at this day used to give countenance to it: And they say they are sure that God did *once hate Idolatry*, and so hate it as that he could not endure to be served in the vessels, worshipt in the places, nor after the manner (in the most minute circumstances) that Idolatry

latry was committed in; and therefore we have Reason to ſuſpect that the things required of us are diſpleaſing to God: our uſing of them has emboldened Idolaters, and hardened them to go on without repentance in the way of ſo great abomination: Nor have they been a Bridge as was hoped, to bring them over to us, but a Boat to waft us over to them, they being more hardened by our retaining them, and ſome of our own made more wavering; thinking there can be no great difference between thoſe Religions, where there is ſo great a Symbolizing in outward modes and Ceremonies.

3. They are ſure that *all uncommanded worſhip is forbidden worſhip*, and do think their time ill beſtowed with him that ſhall deny it: All worſhip being part of that Homage and ſervice we owe to God, it will be impoſſible to Gueſs what he will accept as ſuch without revelation: Now we are ſure that the *Enquirer* owns the Liturgy to have been a *principal part of worſhip*: and we are as ſure that the Ceremonies are *part of the Liturgy*, and that which is a *part of a part*, is part of the whole, nor can any man diſcern any difference between them, and other things which are confeſſedly parts of worſhip, and therefore they think they may with modeſty ſay, there's ground enough for a violent ſuſpicion of their ſinfulneſs.

2. The affirmative part of his Aſſertion follows; *It muſt be plain neceſſity or certainty of ſin in complyance that can juſtifie any ſeparation*: I ſhould be glad to know what *certainty of ſin he* will allow to *juſtifie a ſeparation?* does he Expect a *mathematical certainty?* or only a *moral aſſurance?* If you ask an Arithmetician ſays (Iuſtin Martyr in his dialogue with Trypho) how many twice two will make? he will anſwer yow as often, *four!* and if I were asked a thouſand times *what certainty of ſin* were required to the *ſuſpenſion of my own act*, I would as often anſwer no more of neceſſity then that the thing does *not appear* to my beſt and Impartial judgment to be *Lawful*, ſeparation is *not neceſſarily a ſin*. there are as *pregnant Commands* for it, as *prohibitions* of it, It may be a *duty*, and it may be a *ſin*, and why need we not *as plain* argument to prove that ſeparation is *not my duty*, as that it is *not my ſin?* ſeeing it may be one as well as the other? why now he arreſts us with his Reaſons.

§ 1. *Foraſmuch* (ſays he) *as I cannot be diſcharged from a plain duty, but by an equal plainneſs of ſin.* This reaſon looks very prettily at firſt ſight, and yet it demonſtrates no more then a great good will to the cauſe: And 1. 'Tis no more then a plain begging of the Queſtion; viz. That *Complyance is a plain duty*. Schiſm indeed is a *plain ſin*, but ſeparation *is not* plainly Schiſm; It is a *plain contradiction* to the Aſſertion, but not a *plain confutation* of it, unleſs the denyal of it in other words be a *confutation*. The buſineſs in ſhort is this; I ſuſpect *ſuch Compliance* is *not my duty*; and again, I ſuſpect the *terms of Communion are ſinful*, and ſurely we may ſet *ſuſpected ſin*, as a Barr to what is but *ſuſpected duty* at any time of the day; let us a little compare things: that which he calls plain duty, is complyance with ſuch a Church as impoſes

things *unnecessary*, *burdensom and suspicious*, that which he calls *plain sin*, is refusing such compliance; now this say I, is a plain begging of the Question which is all the plainess in his Reason: First to enquire whether such a separation or non-Complyance be Lawful, and then to suppose such Complyance to be plain duty. And then to assign this for the Reason that nothing but equal plainess of sin can discharge me from a plain duty. 2. Dissenters do affirm that it is *as plain*, nay *more plain*, and if he will have it *so much more plain* a sin to practise the Ceremonies then to separate, for separation may be a duty in some cases, but the practising of such Ceremonies cannot be a duty *in any Case*, on this side divine prescription: God has warranted separation in the General, but he has not so warranted Ceremonies.

§ 2. His second reason is; *And for this phrase* suspected; *it is so loose and uncertain that there's no hold of it, men will easily suspect what they have no mind to*: whether this word *suspected* be a *phrase* or no, I shall leave to the wrangling Grammarians, only I am afraid in a while, every small *particle* will be a phrase, where these Gentlemens occasions require it. *A suspected evil* is no such trivial thing in the Apostles divinity as the Enquirer would perswade us: to act in any case when we have not clear light into the Lawfulness of the action is sin, and such a one as renders the actor obnoxious to eternal damnation, *He that doubts is damned if he eat.* And indeed to act against the restraint of our own judgment *though mistaken*, argues a mind prepared to act against our judgments, if they *had not been mistaken*: He that shall attempt to *clip the Kings Coyn*, may meet with a *plated piece*, yet had if been *right stander'd*, he would have served it no better: *that men will easily suspect what they have no mind to*, ought not to prejudice those who have *no mind to a thing*, because they *suspect it to be evil*. Tis *as easy for another to say that what men* have a *desperate love to*, they will never be brought to *suspect its sinfulness*. What wise man would suspect four or five hundred pounds *per Annum* to be *unlawful*? our Inclinations naturally warp towards ease, and rest, and they that know no God but their mistaken selves, will own no Scripture but what is dictated from the inspiration of *fleshly Interest*. The Byas of nature draws us more to *suspect the Lawfulness* of that which *being unlawful* would undo us, then to suspect that *to be unlawful*, which *being Lawful* would advance us.

And this may justifie all sober Dissenters, that they who condemn them are confessed to be too blame in clogging their Communion with unnecessary, burdensom and suspected Conditions, and they who are condemned for suspecting it to be as sinful in them to obey as it is in others to command, and thereupon suspending their Compliance, are either violently cast out of, or not admitted into Communion. And this is your monstrous Schismatick.

And I am very confident, that not only the Scripture, but all Antiquity with the unanimous suffrage of the Reformed Churches

es will juſtifie and acquit that perſon of the Guilt of Schiſm, who being ſound in the faith, holy in his life, earneſtly pleading, and petitioning for Reformation, humbly deſiring he may have Chriſts ordinances upon Chriſts terms, and yet being denyed his Right ſhall make his applications to ſome other particular Church of Chriſt, where his admittance may be more eaſy, his continuance more certain and ſafe, his mind not diſtracted with ſuſpicions about his own actings, but his whole ſtrength and ſpirits expended in the edification of his own ſoul in truth, holineſs, and peace, which before were waſted in doubtful diſputations.

(2) The ſecond thing he will ſay is, *if the non-neceſſity of ſome of the terms of Communion be a warrant of ſeparation, then there can be no ſuch thing as Schiſm at all*: I doubt not but he intends that his argument ſhall proceed a remotione Conſequentis ad remotionem Antecedentis: But there is *ſuch a ſin as Schiſm*, therefore the non-neceſſity of ſome of the terms of Communion is not a warrant of ſeparation: there are many things I would anſwer to this argument: 1. That the whole Syllogiſm is troubled with an old malady called ignoratio Elenchi, for 'tis not half an hour ago ſince he undertook to prove that *the Churches requiring indifferent, unneceſſary, or at moſt ſuſpected things would not excuſe the perſon that ſhould ſeparate from the Guilt of Schiſm*. Afterwards he put in *burdenſom* into the Queſtion: And now I perceive he would be glad to take Eggs for his money, if he could get them, and ſit down content with this ſorry concluſion, that the *non-neceſſity of ſome of the Terms is no ſufficient warrant of ſeparation*: which fault is an argument ſome call an Ignorance of the Queſtion, but I call it a fighting with his own ſhadow, what if bare non-neceſſity alone, without burdenſomneſs, or what if both theſe without ſtrong ſuſpicion of ſin will not warrant it, yet if all conjunct will do the feat. Diſſenters will Eſcape the *Hue and Cry* after Schiſm, and Schiſmaticks; 2. I deny his Conſequence: there might be, there would be Schiſm, to much Schiſm, though I confeſs not half ſo much as there is, though the non-neceſſity of the Terms were a good warrant of ſeparation: If Schiſm lay in nothing indeed but *running away from* a Church (as the vulgar error carries it) he had come a little nearer the mark; but if we durſt content our ſelves with the Scripture notion of Schiſm which includes thoſe feuds, heats, inteſtine broiles, thoſe envyings malignities, wherewith factious and bandying parties in the beſome of a Church do perſecute each other, there might be as much Schiſm as almoſt the Divel could deſire, and yet no ſeparation: But let us hear his proof of the Conſequence, *foraſmuch* (ſays he) *as there never was, nor probably ever will be ſuch a Church as required nothing of thoſe in her Communion, but things ſtrictly and abſolutely neceſſary*. Ergo what? why therefore if *the non-neceſſity of ſome of the terms of Communion be a ſufficient warrant of ſeparation, there can be no ſuch thing as Schiſm*, pray forbear, there is a medium as I take it between *non-*

neceſſary, and *ſtrictly* and *abſolutely neceſſary*; I mean thoſe things which being neither *neceſſary in their own nature*, nor made ſo by any *poſitive Law of God* in particular: yet by a concurrence of weighty circumſtances ſerving under ſome General Command of God, do become at *that time, and under thoſe circumſtances* neceſſary, and theſe are thoſe things wherein many Churches, I ſuppoſe all Churches, have at one time or other Exerciſed their power, now then though 'tis true that *if the non-abſolute neceſſity* of the Terms of Communion be a warrant of ſeparation, there would be *no ſuch thing as Schiſm at all* by unwarrantable ſeparation from a Church, becauſe perhaps *there never was a Church that required nothing of thoſe in her Communion but things abſolutely neceſſary*; yet it may be true, that the *non-neceſſity* of the Terms of Communion may be a good warrant for ſeparation, and yet there may be Schiſm enough in the world: for captious froward Spirits will be cavilling at, and dividing upon the account of thoſe things which by a particular Church are required *becoming neceſſary from circumſtances*: but to inform him aright in this matter; Non-conformiſts do affirm, that what ever is made a condition of Communion, ought to have *ſome kind of neceſſity* in it or with it, *anteccdent to its impoſition*; and being made ſuch a condition; ſtill he is harping upon: and has great mind to prove what we are not concern'd to deny: but if he tempts to it, perhaps I may deny it: *That there was never, nor ever will be any ſuch Church*, &c. And becauſe I would entertain the Reader with a little of our *Enquirers* merriments, he ſhall hear his proof of the point.

1. He tells us *he has ſhewed in this partly in the Introduction*, and ſo pag. 2. For proof of the *ſoundneſs of this Churches conſtitution*, he poſts us over to the Introduction, and when we come to turn over this *Introduction*, there's an honeſt well-meaning oration of ſomething or other without proof. 2. *He could eaſily make it appear at large through all Ages*; well, then we will ſuſpend our belief till his *Magdeburgenſis* come abroad; 3. He will *ſave himſelf, and the Reader the labour* (of writing the Century's) very good! We are ſatisfied any way i'th world, he ſhall find us the moſt reaſonable people in the world, if he will but abate us theſe *unneceſſary impoſitions*: But which way ſhall we ſpare our pains? oh thus! *name one Church if you can that hath admitted of no other opinion or Rites, but ſuch as have been abſolutely neceſſary*. And has this great monrain teemed this little mouſe? He ſhould have proved that *never any Church in any age, in any Country, but had* impoſed *things not abſolutely neceſſary*, and he like a modeſt man that can be content with a Competency, proved only that there never was any Church but *admitted* ſuch things: is there no ſmall critical difference between *admitting* in the uſe, and practiſe ſomethings indifferent in an *indifferent way and impoſing*, requiring, and enjoyning them as *neceſſary Terms of Communion*: I will make a fair

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motion; Let this Church *admit* of the uſe, and practiſe of ſome things not *abſolutely neceſſary*, yet neither in their nature ſinful, nor for multitude burdenſom, nor for abuſe ſuſpected, nor in their inſtituted uſe Sacramental, and *yet not impoſe* them as *neceſſary*, *Conditions of Communion*, and if there be leſs uniformity, there will be a Thouſand times more unity, and true inward love, Evangelical tenderneſs, and fraternal forbearance to compenſate a little outward decorum, which perhaps is very Surprizing with women and children.

All this while I diſtruſt not the Readers Acumen to ſee the Sophiſtry; He would make it out there's no Church which *admits* not ſome determinations, not ſtrictly and abſolutely neceſſary; and he would thence inferr that there's no Church, but what *impoſes* ſuch not abſolutely neceſſary determinations, and thence that if non-neceſſary Terms of Communion be a warrant of ſeparation, there can be no Schiſm in the world at all: whereas there are ſuch things as being neither *unneceſſary*, nor yet *abſolutely neceſſary*, may be fit matter of agreement in Chriſtian Societies, that they may be more ſtedily governed, more peaceably and inoffenſively managed, the Ordinances more methodically and orderly adminiſtred, and the ſpiritual and eternal welfare of ſouls more effectually advanced.

(3) The third and laſt thing he will ſay is, that *ſomethings are neceſſary to the Conſtitution and adminiſtration of a particular Church, that are not in themſelves neceſſary abſolutely conſidered*; This he *will ſay*, and who can help it? why will he ſay it? why doubtleſs as a *medium* to prove his *concluſion*, or he had better have ſaid nothing; now that which he engaged to prove was this; That *things indifferent, unneceſſary, &c. Impoſed as conditions of Communion are not enough to Excuſe the perſon that ſeparates, from a participation of the ſin of Schiſm*; the argument marches in this order: If ſomethings are *neceſſary to the Conſtitution* of a Church, which are not *abſolutely neceſſary in themſelves*, then the Impoſition of *unneceſſary Terms of Communion* is no Excuſe for ſeparation; but the former is true, Ergo ſo is the later; or in ſhort, if ſome things be *neceſſary* then, the Church may impoſe things *not neceſſary*: quod erat demonſtrandum.

He has been told over and over again, that many things *not neceſſary in themſelves*, may become neceſſary *pro hic & nunc*, but then they muſt be *thus qualified*, before they can be fit matter of a Churches determination. 1. They muſt be neceſſary one way or other, *Antecedently* to the Churches determination; 2. The *neceſſity* muſt extend *as far as the determination*: For if they become neceſſary to one particular Church, and not to another, it will not oblige the other Church to come under the Impoſition, unleſs they come alſo under the neceſſity. 3. That when the neceſſity *evidently ceaſes*,

the Impoſition ought alſo to ceaſe, and the members of the Church may claim it of right to be relaxed of the burden, and may reaſſume their former liberty, which the preſent neceſſity did reſtrain. 4. Churches are not to feighn neceſſities, and Imaginary Exigencies as an Engine of ambitious ſpirits to try concluſions upon mens Conſciences, or practiſe upon their tameneſs, and therefore the neceſſity ought to be ſuch as carries its own evidence along with it.

There are many things which the Divine Authority had determined as to its *kind and ſort*, which yet are not ſo determined in the *Individuals*; now when a Church meets with any *of theſe*, ſhe muſt come to a determination, for otherwiſe the Divine Commands cannot poſſibly be reduced into act, nor our duty Exerciſed: Thus he has commanded his Churches to aſſemble themſelves together for publick worſhip, he has appointed them Ordinances wherein to receive mercy, and grace, from him and Officers to adminiſter the Ordinances in the Church, the Church therefore is obliged to do whatſoever is neceſſary to the doing of her duty; Thus God having obliged them to worſhip, they muſt come to an agreement about the place, meerly becauſe 'tis impoſſible *to meet no where*. But if the *divine will* hath not determined *in ſpecie*, man cannot under the moſt ſpecious pretence of decency, or adorning the worſhip inſtitute any thing, becauſe it wants *ſome head of a Divine Command*, to which to reduce it; Thus God having given no Command to any Church, to worſhip him under ſenſible formes, and ſignes of Inviſible Grace, no Church has power to Inſtitute any ſuch, and worſhip God by them; For in this caſe Divine wiſdome, Love, and Authority, have demonſtrated themſelves, and ſetled Enow to anſwer Gods Ends and ours.

If he had ſaid, as often as you baptize, beſides the waſhing with water which I have commanded you, ſee that you make ſome figure over the face of the perſon to be baptized, and not determined the figure, whether Hexagonal, pentagonal or the like, the Church muſt come to a concluſion about ſome figure, or the duty muſt for ever lye fallow.

But a General Command, that *all things be done decently and in order*, will never introduce theſe Symbolical Ceremonies, becauſe the Command may be ſatisfied without them, or any of them, they are not neceſſary ſo much as by *disjunction*; whatſoever is comprehended under a Divine precept, is a neceſſary duty at leaſt by disjunction, Antecedent to any Command of any Church; but theſe Ceremonies are not neceſſary in any ſenſe antecedently to the Command of a Church, and therefore are not comprehended under that General precept. *Let all things be done decently and in order*; And indeed if they were, the ſign of the Croſs would be a neceſſary duty, not only in or at *Baptiſme*, but in the *Lords Supper*, in *every prayer*, in *all preaching*, in *ſinging of Pſalms*, and in *every Religious Exerciſe*, ſeeing that precept enjoyns *all things to be done decently and in order*. And we

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may presume that our Saviour, with his Disciples and Apostles, performed All divine service in the most decent, congruous, and edifying modes, and yet they never practised that, or any other Ceremony of that sort; and therefore they are not comprehended under the Rule.

Nevertheless our *Enquirer* is resolved he will give us two Instances of this Truth that *some things are necessary to the Constitution, and administration of a particular Church, that are not in themselves necessary absolutely considered*: And if he thinks it worth the while, he may give us two hundred, for we are perfectly unconcerned in them all.

(1) The first instance is in the Apostles times: *the abstaining from things strangled and blood, was by the Council of Jerusalem adjudged and declared necessary to be observed by the Gentiles, in order to an accommodation between them and the Jews; and yet I suppose scarce any body thinks the observation of that Abstinence so Enjoyned necessary in it self*: Let us apply it, either then the *abstaining from Ceremonies* must be adjudged *necessary in order to an Accommodation between our Church, and other Protestants*, or the *observing* of them be adjudged necessary *in order to an accommodation between us and the Romanists*, which he would chuse, I am not informed.

But let us Examine a little his great Instance.

§ 1. *It was adjudged and declared necessary to be observed* (says he) Therefore (say I) it was enjoyned, because *first necessary*, and *not made* necessary by the *Injunction*: The thing was not unnecessary before the *Synodal Letters*, nor the Council at liberty to have *determined the contrary* unless an accommodation between Jew, and Gentile, was a thing unnecessary, 15. Acts 28. *It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us to lay upon you no greater burden then those necessary things*, πλὴν τῶν ἐπάναγκες τούτων. Now let him try his skill to conclude a power to impose *things unnecessary* from this fact of theirs, who only imposed *things necessary*.

§ 2. That a Council had the *Immediate assistance of the Holy Ghost*, and might more safely adventure upon such an Imposition, then any particular or National Church, who as they have *no promise*, cannot *in faith* expect any such extraordinary direction; and we hope that no Church will assume equal power to impose, unless they could produce equal authority for their power, in which the Consciences of Christians might securely acquiesce: It would be strange language from a Synod, *It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us to lay upon you no other burdens then these necessary things*, that yet observe all Ceremonies of our appointment.

§ 3. The people might reasonably conform to that decree, which had their own *Antecedent consent*, and the more patiently bear the burden, which was not imposed upon *them, without themselves*, for this Canon was not only sent to the Churches by the order of the *Apostles, and Elders, and the whole Church*, v. 22.

but what ever obligatory power there was in it *from man*, It ran in the name of the *Apostles, Elders and Brethren*; But alas the Case is otherwise with the poor Churches in reference to impositions of late Ages, who know no more what Impositions shall be laid upon their Consciences, then the poor horse is acquainted whither his Master intends to ride him.

§. 4. This was a Decree *not to burden* them, but to *ease and relieve* them, not to pinch the Gentiles, but to discharge them of those servile loads, which some Judaizing Converts, would have imposed on them; we read v. 1. *That certain came down from Judea which taught the brethren; and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses ye cannot be saved.* And when Paul, and Barnabas opposed this Tyranny, yet such was their Zeal for their old Ceremonies, that they reinforced their scatter'd squadrons from *certain of the Sect of the Pharisees who believed.* (v. 5.) *saying, That it was necessary to Circumcise them, and Command them to keep the Law of Moses*: At last the Case comes before the Council, and they determine against these Judaizing Bigots; That their blind Zeal should not be the measure of what was necessary, or unnecessary; and yet not so Exasperate them, lest perhaps they might apostatize wholly from Christ, and relapse to Moses, (as they were in a fair way,) They determine to *Lay no other burden upon them but those* (really) *necessary things*: In opposition to *those other*, which the Jewish Brethren *falsly* pleaded to be necessary: so that they eased the burden which some would *by doctrine* have laid upon their shoulders, and only charg'd them by their determination with what was *really necessary.*

§. 5. Let us consider the things Imposed. v. 29. Abstaining *from meats offer'd to Idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication.* Of which, *fornication*, was unlawful in it self; By *Blood* many Learned men understand *Murther*, which opinion the Learned Dr. Hammond recites, and, as I remember approves: As to the *not eating of things strangled.* It had Contracted a very Reverend, and Grave Countenance by its Antiquity, being Numbered amongst the seven percepts of the sons of Noah: And lastly, as for *meats offer'd to Idols*, under *that Notion*, it was, and is still, unlawful.

§. 6. All this was for Avoiding scandal; The Morality of which precept, had it been understood by the Raw Novice Professors of the gentiles, it had taught them to abstain from a greater matter then *Blood or things strangled* (supposing them indifferent) that they might give no offence. And therefore whilst this Canon was in force, and the sharpest edge set on it, I question not but that the Gentile Christian might have eaten the τὸ πνικτὸν priyately, or in Company where no offence was taken, for what were the Jews concern'd what I should eat at home, either of the μιάσματα, fragments, or portions of the sacrifices sent to me by the Heathen Relation, or of those things that were killed by suffocation:

focation: for thus was the end of the Decree attained, the Apoſtles ſatisfied, the Jews pleaſed, and Chriſtian Liberty aſſerted, and vindicated: But the Caſe is otherwiſe with us: for ſuch is the Holineſs of a Croſs, or Surplice, that if a Miniſter ſatisfied *in their uſe*; and yet convinced that they ought to know their diſtance, and give place to the Conſcience of *the weak*, or of *the ſtrong*, who is ſuppoſed weak in this inſtance, ſhall omit them, he ſhall be lyable to be reviled *by the Author of the former part of the Enquiries*, p. 25. for an *underminer of the Church*, *A debaucher of his Office*, and what not, and for want of a white garment, ſhall have a hole pickt in his black coat, and ſuſpended both ab Officio, & beneficio.

§. 7 Here was no penalty annext by way of ſanction to this Decree. The Apoſtles contented themſelves with that ſpiritual Power wherewith the Lord Chriſt had Armed them: nor do we read that ever any were excommunicated about it, nor urged it as an indiſpenſable Condition of enjoying the ordinances of the Goſpel.

§. 8 It appears from the Apoſtle Paul, that when this Decree had a little gratified a people tenacious of old uſages, and humour'd them into ſome handſome Complyance, it Expired of Courſe, (as to whatever obligation aroſe from the prohibition of things *in themſelves* indifferent) and lay amongſt the Obſolete Canons not regarded, for when the Reaſon of an Eccleſiaſtical Law ceaſes, the Law it ſelf ceaſes, without any formal repeal; which ſome expecting ſhould have been more ſolemn, conceive it in force to this day.

There is no queſtion but thoſe Churches who going of from the Dregs of Rome, finding their people both Ignorant, and obſtinate, and extreamly averſe to a through Reformation, did in prudence leave them ſome of their old little toyes, till they ſhould know better, and then they would throw 'em away of themſelves; They that had ſuckt in Popery with their Mothers milk, would be very pieviſh, and wrangle unmercifully to be weaned all at once: ſtaied nurſes did therefore deal with them as they could bear, expecting when they ſhould fall to more manly food: But ſeeing by this time they have either reacht their end, or never will; and ſeeing the ſubtle enemy of Purity and peace, would pervert their ends, if they be permitted quietly to expire, and dye of themſelves, (which they would ſoon do, if not fetcht again by their over-Officious friends importunity) The Proteſtant Religion ſhould have no Cauſe to bewail their funerals.

[2] His ſecond Inſtance is in *Church-government*. The ſhort of it is thus much: That *ſome* Church-government is neceſſary, yet no particular form neceſſary. *As whether it ought to be Monarchical, or Ariſtocratical, Epiſcopal, or Conſiſtorial.* This ſeems very dangerous Doctrine, for now it ſeems *Epiſcopal government* is degraded of its old pretence to a *jus Divinum*: And now the Preſbyterian and Congregational forms ſtand upon even grounds with the Prælatical, ſaving wherein this laſt has got the advantage *by Law*. But here we are to underſtand that *his Text and his marginal reading*, his Chethib, and Keri, do ſtrangely vary, and its like to

cruciate our Rabbines to reconcile them: for his Text reads thus: *Few, or none will affirm that either of these formes* (Episcopal or Consistorial) *are necessary.* But his Margine reads thus; *I do not mean to weaken the Authority, and reputation, of Episcopal government, which I sincerely think to be both best in it self, and Apostolical for it's Antiquity:* Thus the Author of the Introduction, calls it *the Most primitive Government.* Now some will perplex themselves how to Agree his *scriptio*, and his *Lectio*: The *text*, and the *Comment*. He tells The *Episcopal* Mode is *not necessary*, and yet he does it not at all *to weaken it's reputation*; though it has been *hetherto reputed* to stand upon a divine bottome by our Learned Churchmen; but yet he *does not Mean* any harm, Good man, no not he: but with such *good meanings*, silly soules use to palliate the irregular effects of grosse Ignorance. If a Man should come to my house, and with his *crows*, and *pickaxes*, begin to belabour the foundation, Alarmed with the noise, I come out, friend what do you mean to weaken the foundation of my house. I shall have the Roof shortly come about my ears; *Oh Good Sir.* (replies he) *I do assure you I have no meaning to weaken your house, or shake its walls, I sincerely think your house is the strongest house in all the Parish*: and to his work he falls again as hard as he can drive: A declaration contrary to the fact has no more Credit with me then it needs must.

But this is not the worst on't. Here seems to be an irreconcileable Contradiction. Episcopacy, is *Indifferent*, and yet *best in it self*: *Not necessary*, and yet *Apostolical*, and yet some think there was an absolute necessity of this quarrel between the Text, and Margine; The Margin was Added to make the Text passe muster, and if the one had not been a *Deleatur*, the other had miss't of an *Imprimatur*; The necessity of the Argument required Episcopacy should be *a Thing indifferent*: but the necessity of pleasing *his Patron* required it should be *Best in it self*; And in what a Lamentable plight must a Learned Author be, to gratify such Contrary demands? Let him then Agree himself with himself, whilst I examine his Reasonings.

Church government is *Necessary in the General*; but *this or that form* of government, in particular, is *not necessary*, (*not absolutely necessary*) therefore somethings *not necessary in themselves, are, or may be necessary to the constitution, or administration of a particular Church.* This, if I greatly mistake not, is the whole strength of this Period. To which I answer in these particulars. (1.) That though the Scripture does not trouble us with Terms of Art, *Monarchical*, *Aristocratical*, *Democratical*, Yet at least *all the Officers* belonging to the Church of Christ are there *specially determined*: And *from the Nature of the Officers*, the species, or *particular form* of the Government, will *of necessity* emerge; If the Officers of the particular Churches stand upon equal ground one with another, the government which results from thence will be Aristocratical: If there be an Imparity,

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and ſubordination of the governors of one Church to another the government which reſults from thence will be Monarchical; And if the Churches governed by their reſpective Paſtors are not knit together by ſome Common bond, the government will be denominated Congregational. (2.) Suppoſing that the government is only *Commanded in the general*, but the *particular forms not determined*, yet this will never conclude, that the Church may Impoſe ſuch things as Terms of Communion which are *not Commanded in the general*. It can never follow that a Church may *inſtitute, and impoſe* Ceremonies, for which there is *no General warrant*, becauſe it muſt agree upon *a Government*, for which there is *a General warrant*: Nor that ſhe may Impoſe thoſe things which are *not neceſſary* either to *the Conſtitution or Adminiſtration of a Church*, becauſe ſhe muſt determine upon that, which is neceſſary both to the *conſtitution*, and *adminiſtration* of it. (3.) He pretends to prove that *it is unlawful to ſeparate* upon the Account of *unneceſſary Conditions of Communion*, and he gives us an Inſtance *in Epiſcopacy*, which yet his Margin affirms to *Be beſt in it ſelf*, and *Apoſtolical for Antiquity*: from hence we are inſtructed, That *unneceſſary conditions*, are ſuch as are or may be *Beſt in themſelves*: And let him but produce ſuch Terms of Communion, as being *unneceſſary in themſelves*, are yet *beſt in themſelves*, and I am confident there will be an end of this Controverſy: whereas therefore his Margine tells us, That this is *Argumentum ad Hominem*: he ſays very true, it is ſo to *himſelf and his friends*. If Epiſcopal government be *beſt in it ſelf*, how will he thence conclude the Churches power to Impoſe *indifferent things*, *unneceſſary things*; which are *not beſt in themſelves*? But if Epiſcopal government be *indifferent*, and *unneceſſary in it ſelf*, how is it *beſt in it ſelf*, and *Apoſtolical for Antiquity*? An *indifferent* thing, *beſt in it ſelf*. An *unneceſſary Apoſtolical conſtitution*, is a notion which ſounds very harſhly in my ears, and perhaps the moſt of our Readers.

But we are all tyred out with theſe paralogiſms, we have heard a great clamour of *Schiſm*, *Schiſm*, as the manner is, and when we come to Enquire after that Reaſon, we are returned with a nihil dicit, or which is all one, *nothing to that purpoſe*.

CHAP. III.

Of the Nature of the things ſcrupled by Diſſenters: Shewing that there is no neceſſity to ſacrifice either Conſcience or Truth to Peace, which may be purchaſed at lower Rates, or elſe would be too dear.

IT was my Unhappineſs to read of one; who, to an excellent Diſcourſe of the *influence of* Adams *Tranſgreſſion upon the miſery of mankind*, made this Blaſphemous return; *What a ſtir is here about the eating of an Apple?* Much what of the ſame Temper was that Bluſtering Hector Pope *Julius* the ſecond: Who being humbly adviſed by a Cardinal *not to Rage ſo immoderately for a Peacock*, (which it ſeems was ſtoln) anſwered like himſelf, *God could be Angry, and Plague the World for a ſowry Apple, and ſhall not I much more for a delicate Peacock?*

When our *Enquirer* would perſwade us, that the Things in Controverſie are of *ſmall Importance*: Let me perſwade him, that *no Diſobedience* to God, or *Treachery* to our own Souls, can be little to thoſe who underſtand the Majeſty of the one, or the Worth of the other.

When the Compilers of our Liturgy ſhall plead on the behalf of the Ceremonies, *that though the keeping or omitting of one, in it ſelf conſidered, is but a ſmall thing; yet the wilful and contemptuous tranſgreſſion of a common Order and Diſcipline, is no ſmall offence before God*: I hope without offence we may affirm a little more of *the leaſt of Chriſts Precepts*! That *little ſins will find a great Hell.*

It's the ſolemn, and Religious cuſtom of thoſe who would make their own pleaſures the ſupream Reaſon of their own Commands, and our Obedience; firſt to flatter us, that the matter is inconſiderable, till we have ſubmitted; and then to threaten us with the ſanction of thoſe commands, as no leſs then *Eternal damnation*, when violated.

But if the making the Things in Diſpute a *Sacrifice*, would ſatisfie our *Enquirer*, we are content they be immediately offered up as a *Holocauſt*, to *the peace and unity of the Church*, in thoſe flames they have kindled: But he comes to explain himſelf: 'Tis not that *the Ceremonies* ſhould become a *Burnt-offering to Peace*; but that *the Conſciences* of the Diſſenters ſhould be Sacrificed to *the Ceremonies*: or, which is more to his purpoſe, *their Perſons* Sacrificed to thoſe *Touchy Deities*, (as he calls them) *of Cuſtom and Vulgar Opinion.*

Thoſe ſins, which men count *ſmall*, are therefore *great*, becauſe their temptations are *leſs preſſing*, and ſo being more eaſily avoidable, have leſs to plead in their excuſe, or Defence. But

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an *Impoſing ſpirit*, always turns *the wrong end of the Perſpective-glaſs*, which ſhrinks a Mountain into a Mole-hill, and a Bulky Minſter, with all its Cathedral Apurtenances, into a *Chappel of Eaſe*, where twenty Nobles *per Annum* will not Defray the Charges of a Ceremonious Conformity.

All things are Little or Great, as they ſerve the preſent occaſion: *Little*, when their Impoſing is vindicated; and *Great*, when the Neglect of them comes to be puniſhed. *Little, or nothing*, till the yoke is faſtened on; and then *weighty*, when once their Conſcience is ſhakell'd with Canonical obedience.

The undoubted way therefore to ſettle a righteous and a durable peace, is to take *juſt Meaſures* of things: Not to keep *one Buſhel*, by which to mete out *Impoſitions*, and *Another*, by which to deal out *Cenſures*; neither on the account of *Peace* to Reneger any of *Gods Truths*; nor by unneceſſary Impoſitions to diſturb the Churches quiet.

And if men could be perſwaded to ſet aſide Paſſion, and thoſe alluring baits to Empire over ſouls, and calmly conſider how mean (at the beſt) thoſe things are upon which they lay the vaſt weight of our Concord, they would ſee Reaſon, not to perpetuate our Diviſions, nor intail quarrels upon innocent poſterity, who are not yet imbroyled in our Contentions; upon the account of thoſe things, which the Church may well ſpare without any eclipſe of her Glory; part with, without Impeachment of her Wiſdom; leave free, without prejudice to the Worſhip, or juſt offence to any, to the unſpeakable joy of all Cooler ſpirits, beſides the infinite ſatisfaction that would ariſe to our Brethren of the Reformed Religion beyond the Seas.

There are three things, which *the Enquirer* has propounded to himſelf to Treat of in this Chapter.

[1] That *the Cauſes of Diſſentions amongſt us, are not like thoſe upon which we ſeperated from the Roman Communion.* We acknowledge it with all cheerfulneſs! Yet a man may die of many other Diſeaſes beſides the Plague. We Rejoyce that the Church of *England* has ſuch clear grounds to juſtify her departure: And we wiſh we had fewer grounds to juſtify ours.

But here for the credit of his Diſcourſe (wherein we are all equally concerned with himſelf) I could have wiſh't he had not prefaced it with ſo foul and groſs a ſlander: *It is ſaid by ſome, that there is as much cauſe for Secetſion from this Church now, as there was from the Roman in the time of our Anceſtors.* I only demand ſo much Juſtice from the Reader, as to ſuſpend his belief till this judicious Imputation be made good, and in the mean time return thus much in Anſwer.

§ 1. There may be *a juſt Cauſe*, where there is not an *equal Cauſe* of ſeparation: There may be a great latitude in the terms of Communion, and yet all injuſtifiable, and there may be great variety in the Reaſons of ſeparation, and yet all may be warrantable. Had the Popes Terms been much lower, they had been much too high for our Anceſtors to come up to: And though

though the Terms of this Church are lower then those of *Rome*, yet they are something too high for Dissenters, who humbly plead that they have just cause for a *peaceable Departure*, since they cannot *peaceably Abide* in the Society.

§. 2. Upon our *Enquirers* Principles, it had been as lawful for our Ancestors to have continued in Communion with the Roman; as for Dissenters to conform to the present demands of this Church. For let me have a clear Answer, why *their Private Wisdoms*, ought not to be sacrificed to *the Publick Wisdom* in Queen *Maries* Reign, as our private wisdom resign to the publick, under our present Circumstances? For in this Case, we consider not *the lawfulness, or unlawfulness of the Terms* as they are in *their Naked selves*; but where *the final Decision* shall rest, *whether they be lawful or unlawful?* Now the *Enquirer* tells us, page 168. *Its enough to warrant our obedience, that the thing is the Command of the Superiour, and not beyond the Sphere of his Authority.* But who can measure the Sphere of the Magistrates Authority, unless we could take the just Diameter of it? Again page 178. *The Result of all will be, that instead of prescribing to the Magistrate what he shall determine, or disputing what he hath concluded on, we shall compose our minds, and order our circumstances for the more easy, and cheerful compliance therewith.* What Rivers of precious Blood had this Doctrine saved, had it been broached in Q. *Maries* dayes: That men must *not dispute what the Magistrate has concluded on*: And though he thinks to heal all this by saying page 166. *That God has made the Magistrate a General Commission, and made no exception of this kind*, (meaning as far as Circumstantials, and those things that God himself has not defined) yet this will not salve the difficulty, because 1. Who shall judge what is a *Circumstantial*, and what a *Substantial*; what an *Integral part* only, and what an *Essential part* of Religion? Where shall we lodge the determination ultimately, what *God has defined and not defined*? If the Magistrate! Then our Ancestors are gone by the Common Law. If the private person, we are all *in statu quo*. 2. God has no where determinated Circumstantials, from Substantials in the Magistrates Commission; for though our *Enquirer* has excepted the one, yet it is by his private Authority, which binds not the Magistrate; His Commission is *Patent*, and therefore it may be read. 13 *Rom.* 1. *Let every soul be subject to the higher powers*, &c. This Commission does no more except an *Obedience*, then a *Circumstance*; he that will put in the one, may at pleasure insert the other, and he that will except the one, may and will, except the other. So that I conclude, or at least see no reason why I may not; that according to this *Enquirers* sentiments, had providence allotted us our habitations under a Prince of the Roman Communion, we might have practised all his Injunctions, without warrant to plead our Consciences in Bar: which Principle will bear a mans charges through all the Turks Dominions, and make any man a free Citizen of *Malmsbury*,

bury, when onee Conſcience is ſacrificed to the Deity of Leviathan.

Every true Proteſtant will gladly read his Juſtification of this Churches departure from *Rome*: And therefore though it be not much to the matter in hand, I ſhall not grudge to go a little out of my way with him, for his good company and profitable diſcourſe.

1. *We could not* (ſays he) *continue in the Roman Church upon any better Conditions, then* Nahaſh *propounded to the men of* Jabeſh Gilead *to put out our Right eyes, that we might be fit for their blind Devotion.* Whether the eye be put out that it *cannot*; or hood-winckt, that it *may not* ſee, is no ſuch conſiderable difference; but we have the leſs need of *a Private*, if there be *a Publick eye* that can ſee for us all, and better diſcern the fit Terms of Communion: And whether it be the *right eye*, or *the left*, or both, that our *Enquirer* would pluck out of our heads I cannot tell: for when we have conſidered with the beſt eyes we have whether it be our duty to withdraw from the preſent eſtabliſhment in ſome things, and the reſult of our moſt impartial inquiries, concludes in the affirmative, yet we are Schiſmaticks, and all that is naught; if then we may not ſee with our own eyes, as good pluck them out.

They that fancy man to be but an Automoton, a well contrived piece of Mechaniſm, have certainly fitted him to this Hypotheſis: For ſuppoſe him to be like a Clock, which once put in motion, will jog on the round, and drudge through the Horary circle, and perform you a twelve hours work, in twelve hours time without attendance, or other charge than a little Oyle; and you may then ſet him to what hour you pleaſe. And he ſhall as freely ſtrike twelve at Sun-ſet, as Mid-day.

2. *We muſt not here have renounced our Reaſon*; What if we had? Our own *private Reaſon* is not worth ſo much as to contend with *the publick*: And thanks be to God, that our Governours are Counſelled by their own Reaſons; for had they been guided by the Counſels and Intereſts of ſuch Divines, we muſt have Renounced ours too long ago.

3. *That Church in lieu of the Scriptures gives them Traditions*: Nay, do not wrong the Grave *Tridentine Fathers*; it was but *Pari pietatis affectu veneramur*. The Church of *England* abhors indeed that Sacrilledge, in her 34 Article. *Whoſoever through his private judgement willingly and purpoſely doth openly break the Traditions and Ceremonies of the Church, which be not repugnant to Gods word, ought to be rebuked openly*: And I am confident the Roman Church will allow us openly to break any of hers, when ſhe ſhall confeſs them to be *repugnant to the word of God*.

4. *Inſtead of ſuch things as were from the Beginning, it preſcribes thoſe things that had their beginning from private Intereſt, and ſecular Advantages*: It has been a piece of policy of our Duellers to eſcape the Laws, to croſs the Channel, and fight it out upon *Callice Sands*: If our *Enquirer* will go with me thither I would

diſpute

diſpute it fairly with him, whether *the Terms of Communion be the ſame that were from the Beginning?* If the Church of *Rome* be warrantably deſerted, becauſe her matters ſtand not in the Primitive poſture: They that can make the plea, will expect the ſame privilege. The Learned Author of the Irenicum p. 121. aſſures us, that it is *contrary to the practice and moderation then uſed, to deprive men of their Miniſterial functions for not conforming in Habit, Geſtures*, and the like: and he adds his pious wiſhes: That *God would vouchſafe to convince the Leaders of the Church of this Truth* It will be leſs material therefore, whether the things ſo ſtifly inſiſted on, had *their beginning from private Intereſts and ſecular Advantages*, for if they were not *from the beginning*, is't little to us where they had their riſe.

The Canons of 1640. leave *bowing towards the Altar* indifferent, and *prohibit Cenſuring and Judging*: Extend but the ſame Moderation to all other things as far from the beginning as they, and of no greater Importance, or confine them to Cathedrals as Organs once were, where they that have little elſe to do, are at more leaſure for ſuch operous ſervices; and we ſhall be ſecure as to Schiſm, which the *Enquirer* will certainly yield to, ſince he equalizes that ſin to the moſt horrid crimes of *Idolatry, Murther and Sacriledge.*

5. *They make ſeven Sacraments.* And at our *Equirers* Rates may make ſevenſcore: What is a Divine Sacrament, but *an outward viſible ſign, of an inward and ſpiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Chriſt himſelf, as a means whereby we receive the ſame, and a pledge to aſſure us thereof*: And let him define a humane Sacrament more appoſitely if he can. Then *an outward viſible ſign of an inward and ſpiritual grace ordained by man himſelf; as a means whereby we receive the ſame grace.* And wherein does a Myſtical Ceremony come ſhort of this Deſcription, whoſe declared end is, *To ſtir up the dull mind of man to the remembrance of his duty to God, by ſome notable and ſpecial ſignification, whereby he may be edified.* Nor is there any thing wanting but the Royal aſſent, the Divine ſtamp of Authority to make it a Sacrament as accompliſht at all points as thoſe which are declared *Generally neceſſary to ſalvation.* And if the Papalins erroneouſly judge their five ordained of God, and we confeſs ours are not ſo; all the difference is this; That they are miſtaken, and act proportionably to their miſtake, and we ſee better, and yet act diſproportionably: But the truth is, many of their moſt Learned Writers freely own their five Sacraments to be no more then Eccleſiaſtical Traditions and Myſtical Ceremonies; ſuch as the Sign of the Croſs, though to ſet them off to the eye, they honour them with the Auguſt Title of Sacraments: Thus *Petrus a Soto.* 'Omnes 'illæ Obſervationes ſunt Traditiones Apoſtolicæ, quarum 'principium, Author & origo, in Sacris Scripturis Inveniri 'non poteſt. Cujuſmodi ſunt, Oblatio ſacrificii Altaris, unctio 'Chriſmatis, invocatio Sanctorum, Orationes pro defunctis, 'totum Sacramentum Confirmationis, ordinis Matrimonii, 'Pœnitentiæ, Unctionis extremæ, Merita Operum, neceſſitas 'ſa-

, ſatisfactionis, enumeratio peccatorum faciendæ ſacerdoti. *We are to account all theſe Obſervations, Apoſtolical Traditions, whoſe Beginning, Author and Original, are not found in the Holy Scriptures: Such as are the Oblation of the ſacrifice of the Altar, the Anointing with Chriſme, Invocation of Saints, Prayers for the Dead: The whole Sacrament of Confirmation, of Orders, of Matrimony, of Penitance, of extreme unction; the merits of Good Works, the neceſſity of ſatisfaction, and Auricular confeſſion.*

6. *They have taken away one of the ten Commandments, and have Arts of evacuating all the reſt:* And why may they not evacuate *the ſecond*, as well as our Author *the fourth Commandment*? All were equally promulgated in Mount *Sinai*, all have the ſame Signature of Divine Authority, and he that can make Schiſm equal to Idolatry, may when he ſees his time, throw off the ſecond as he has done the fourth for a piece of Judaical Superſtition.

7. *They have brought in Pageantry inſtead of Piety and Devotion, effaced the true lineaments of Chriſtianity, and inſtead thereof, recommended and obtruded upon the world the dictates of Ambition, the Artifices of gain.* He may ſafely talk his pleaſure at this diſtance; though it would not be ſo prudent to preach this Doctrine where the Popes great Horſe ſets his foot: All the uſe I ſhall make of it is this little: That if the Introduction of Pageantry inſtead of Piety and Devotion be a good warrant to juſtifie our Separation from *Rome*; Let them judge (who have to do with it) whether it were Fellony to remove a mans Quarters ten miles from ſome Cathedrals.

8. Laſtly (ſays he) *theſe things could not be ſubmitted to without grievous ſin, and manifeſt danger of Damnation*: No! now obſerve how the Romaniſt will belabour him with his own Cudgel: p. 122. *Its the cuſtom of thoſe that have a mind to quarrel, to aggravate, and heighten the Cauſes of diſcontent, to the end that the enſuing miſchief, may not be imputed to the forwardneſs of their temper, but to the greatneſs of the provocation. And paſſion is ſuch a magnifying glaſs, as is able to extend a Mole-hill to a Mountain; If men would be perſwaded to lay aſide their paſſions, and calmly conſider the nature of thoſe things that they divided from the Catholick Church upon, they would be ſo far from ſeeing Reaſon to perpetuate the Schiſm, that they would on the contrary be ſeized with wonder and indignation that they have been impoſed upon ſo far as to take thoſe things for great deformities, which upon mature Conſideration are really nothing worſe then Moles, which may be upon the moſt beautiful face*: But the Reader will eaſily ſee that theſe are nothing but ſome ill gathered ſhreds out of your *Formulæ Oratoriæ*, or *Clarks Tranſitions*, which will fit *Proteſtant or Papiſt*, and indeed any School-Boy that has a Theme, or Declamation to compoſe.

That the Cauſes of ſeparation from the Church of *Rome* were pregnant, every way clear and evident, we do therefore agree: And that the Reaſons of ſeparation from the Church of *England*

land are not *so great*, but then neither is *the separation so great*, for as we agree in the fundamental Articles of Religion, so we may quickly agree in all the rest, when some of a more fiery temper will let their Mother Alone to exercise to all her Children such an Indulgence as is agreeable to their various Measures of light in lesser concerns. But (says our Author) *It's quite otherwise in the Church of* England. For.

1. *No man here parts with his faith upon Conformity.* But I am afraid they must part with it, or they will hardly be accepted. Their faith is, that the Lord Christ is the only Lawgiver of his Church; that the Scriptures are the adequate, and Commensurate Rule of all Religious Worship, and if they do not part with thus much of their faith, they must live in a Contradiction to it; but perhaps he may understand their faith better then they themselves.

2. *No man is bound to give away his Reason for Quietness sake:* Then I know who was mistaken p. 64. who tells us. *That since the peace of the Church often depends upon such points as Salvation does not, and since in many of those every man is not a Competent judge, but must either be in danger of being deceived himself, and of troubling others, or of necessity must trust some body else wiser then himself, for recommends in such a case, as the safer way for such private persons to comply with publick determinations.* And we may assure our selves of our *Enquirers* good nature in this particular; who condemnes *Virgilius* for asserting the *Antipodes, though it were demonstrably true, and the contrary impossible.* And then I am afraid we must sacrifice our Reason to Peace, and rather subscribe *like Brutes*, then run the risque of being *persecuted like Men.*

3. *A man may be as holy, and good as he will.* The goodness and holiness of a Christian lyes very much in using *Holy Means* for *Holy Ends*: Gods Holy Ordinances, in order to Holiness in the Habit and Complexion of the Soul: He that may not use the means of Holiness when he will, may not be as Holy as he will: but as Holy as he can without them: He that will use all the means of God in order to that great end, it may possibly cost him more then he would willingly lose for any cause but that of righteousness: Methought it was an odd sight t'other day to see a Grave Divine in his Canonical Habit, marching With a Brace of Informers piping hot on either Hand, the one like the *Gizzard*, the other the *Liver* stuck under the wings of his Sacerdotal Habiliments, from one of his Rectories to the other, to give Disturbance to a Company of poor Innocent people that would have been *a little more holy* if they might; when this is reformed. I'le believe that *the more of Holiness appears, the better Churchmen we are reputed.*

4. *This Church keeps none of her Children in an uncomfortable estate of darkness*; for we must know that there's *a twofold estate of darkness, a comfortable*, and an *uncomfortable* estate: Now the *Comfortable estate* of darkness, lyes *in trusting others*, submitting

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our private to the publick wisdom; this is that blessed state where-into he would wish his best friends: But the *uncomfortable state* is, that Remedy which is Practised in *Spain* and *Italy* for the Cure of Church Divisions. An excellent Remedy it is, but it comes too late to do any good here: The difference between them was observed before, either to be born blind, or made blind, to have no Conscience, or prohibited to exercise it; to have no eyes, or not to use them; and in my private opinion there's no great comfort in either of them.

5. *She debars none of her Members of the comfort and priviledges of Christs Institutions.* Some that have struggled with a doubting Conscience, have attested the contrary; but however she may possibly debar some of *those priviledges and comforts*, that would have been her Members, because they dare not give the price, she rates those priviledges and comforts at.

6. *She recommends the same Faith, the same Scriptures, that the Protestants are agreed in*: Yes! but then she recommends those Ceremonies to boot, in which Protestants neither are nor ever will be agreed in.

We do therefore seriously triumph that the Church of *England* with the Protestants, are also fully and perfectly agreed that *they have not only the same God and Christ, but the same Object of Worship too.* (though I know not wherein *God and the object of worship* differ) *the same way of Devotion in a known Tongue, the same Sacraments, the same Rule of Life, which are all the great things wherein the Consciences of men are concerned*, To which I shall need to say no more; but that we in the General professe our owning of all these, and yet our differences be very considerable, but let *our Consciences be concerned about* no other; no other Sacraments, no other Rule of Life, no other Devotion, and what is necessary to reduce all these into practice, and I can assure him, Dissenters will flock apace into the bosome of the Church.

He promises us now that he *will faithfully and briefly recite the matters in difference.* And I confess for *brevity*, he has performed his promise well enough, but for his *fidelity*, the Dissenters sadly complain of him: I shall therefore crave the liberty to use a little more *prolixity*, and I shall endeavour to compensate it with much more *fidelity*, to reciting the material points wherein we differ.

§

As § 1. Whether a Minister ordained according to the appointment of the Gospel to the exercise of *the whole Ministerial work*, may without sin consent, that a main part of his Office be statedly and totally taken out of his hands, and his work Cantoned at the will of another?

§ 2. Whether any Church has power from Christ to appoint in, and over it self, or Members, any Officers specially distinct from those Christ hath ordained.

§ 3. Whether any Church hath authority from Christ to institute any other Ordinances of fixed and constant use in the Church.

Church then Christ hath instituted?

§. 4. Whether it be an apparent invasion of, and open reproach to the Regal Office of Christ, for any Society of his to institute either new Officers or new Offices, for the Governing and Administring that Society, which the head hath not allowed.

§. 5. Whether it be not the duty of every particular Church to conform all the worship, and administration of Religion to the Laws of their Institution? and that whatever is not so Conformed, be not a Corruption, which ought to be Reformed by those Laws?

§. 6. Whether if a Church shall peremtorily refuse to remove such Officers, Offices, Ordinances, superadded to the Evangelical Law: A person that shall separate from its Communion in those things wherein it refuses to reform, may without breach of charity be called a Schismatick?

§. 7. Whether a Christian may act against the superseding Dictate of his Conscience, and may give it up to be ruled by an Imaginary publick, Conscience?

§. 8. Whether, seeing we have the unerring word of God to guide us to be mislead by our Leaders is a good Countersecurity against the Judgment of God?

§. 9. Whether it be lawful to break the least of Scripture Commandments to purchase our Quiet with men, or secure our own Repose in the world?

§. 10. Whether the command of my Superiour will justify me in Murthering the Soul of my weak Brother, when I may avoid giving the scandal in things indifferent?

§ 11. Whether can the command of a Superiour make that no sin, but a duty: but without that command, had been no duty, but sin?

§. 12. Whether a Minister of the Gospel may submit to have his Prayers and Sermons Composed for him by others? And whether he be a Minister at all who is not able in some measure to discharge both to Edification?

§. 13. Whether a Christian may without sin wholly and perpetually suffer his Christian Liberty to be determined one way, though under future Circumstances, it may be the command of God for a season to determine it the other way?

§. 14. Whether a Christian Willing to subscribe to all that Christ has propounded to him to believe, and to engage solemnly to do all that Christ requires him to do, and not contradicting such engagement by Conversation, arguing him of prævalent Hypocrisy, but having given good proof before men of his Holiness, ought to be denyed Christian Communion?

§. 15. Whether upon such tendries made, and their refusal; only because he will not submit to new Terms of Communion

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not approved by the Word of God, he shall adjoyn himself to some other particular Church, where the Doctrine of Christianity is purely Preached, the Sacraments duely Administred, and the Conditions of enjoying all these, and other the Ordinances of Christ, honourable and easie; such Departure from the one, and Conjunction with the other, be that Schism noted in the Scripture?

§. 16. Whether any Church hath power to advance indifferent things above their indifferent Natures, and make them Holy in their use, and relation, appropriated to Gods immediate Worship, and impose them as the Terms of exercising the Ministerial Office?

§. 17. Whether any Church hath power to institute new dedicating, and initiating signs and symbols, whereby persons are declared and professed to be visible Christians?

§. 18. Whether being clearly convinced by the Word of God that there are Corruptions in a particular Church whereof I am a Member; I ought not to endeavour in my place and Station lawfully to reform them: And if a prevailing number in that Church shall not only refuse to reform, but require of me to renounce all such lawful endeavours, upon pain and peril of casting out of Communion; I may not wave the Society of the corrupt Majority, and adhere to the more sober and moderate party who will reform themselves?

[2] His second task is to prove that *something must be foregone for peace.* The design of this loose Discourse may de reduced to this Argument. Small matters though truths, or duties, are to be sacrificed to peace: But the things that Dissenters stick and boggle at, are such small matters, therefore they ought to be sacrificed to peace. To which I only say at present; That I modestly deny both his Premisses, and do hope he will as modestly deny the Conclusion. And perhaps some Sawcy Fellow or other will take up the Argument, and give it one turn. Small matters that are indifferences ought to be sacrificed to peace, but the things imposed upon Dissenters (in the judgment of the Imposers) are small indifferent things, therefore they ought to be sacrificed to peace, or thus. Those things which we account little, we ought not make necessary to peace & union. But the things which are in difference, are in our own account little, therefore we ought not to make them necessary to peace and union.

Something then we would give for peace, and more then we can modestly speak of: If it were to be had for Money, we should not think that *Gold* could buy *Peace* too dear, though *Truth* may.

But may we humbly enquire of the *Enquirer*, whether he have this Peace to sell? And at what rates it may be purchased? I have *Carefully*, not to say Curiously perused his whole Discourse; and I must confess to the Reader, that I am so far from understanding how the Market goes, that I suspect he know

knows not his own Mind. Page 131. He tells us: *We must be at some cost to purchase it, and part with something for it.* Well! but what is *that something?* Will Petitions, Supplications, Prayers, Humbling our selves at his Footstoole procure us Peace? No! That *something*, is *nothing*: Men are not so mad, as to part with such a rich Commodity *as Peace* for an *old song* of Petitions. What is it then? Oh! pag. 130. He told us from *Erasmus*, *That Peace was not too dear at the price of some Truth.* Very good! Will then telling half a dozen round Lyes procure us our Peace? or the renouncing half a score Scripture-truths. or so? Oh but we are commanded to *buy the Truth; not sell it: Not to do evil that good may come.* And besides that Peace will never wear well, nor last long that is purchased with the loss of Truth. To war with God, or skirmish the Scripture, is no approved method to secure Peace amongst our selves. Well then, pag 132. He tells us, *We must subdue our passions and castigate our hearts:* And I think we have had pretty good Coolers; then we must *take in our sailes, lighten the ship, cast overboard the Fardles of our private fancies and opinions:* And we are Content to cast overboard any thing that is purely our own; only if any of the Rich Lading of Truth should be packt up in *those Fardles*, we humbly pray that may be spared: If our own private personal Concerns were only called for, he should find the Non-conformists as one man; saying, *sin autem* Jonas *ille ego sim, projicite me, in Mare ut tempestas desaviat*: Pray throw us into the Sea, only do not throw any concern of Christ, nor Reformation after us: Well! then he would have us *offer something to those touchy Deities of Custom and Vulgar Opinion.* But really these are a Couple of such Insatiable Idols, it were cheaper to starve them, then feed them; we may Maintain *Bell*, and the *Dragon* at as easie rates: What is it then we must part with for peace? At last it comes out with much ado; Loath to confess till just turning off the Ladder, for these are his Last words under this head, pag. 137. *In a word that we part with all that which is no essential point of our Religion, for Charity which is.* I am heartily sorry that Peace is not to be had upon easier terms! But especially that *Charity*, a Lady of so much Debonaireté, that *seeks not her own*, much less to rob another, that does not to look so Big, and stand upon Terms; should enflame the Reckoning: It is not, it cannot be *Charity*, I know her Temper too well; that requires *Conscience*, *or Truth* should be sacrificed upon her Altar: A true friend she is to Truth, and no less to Peace, and will wait on her *usque ad Aras* and no further. No! It's the Tyrian Idol *Moloch* that old Canibal and bloodsucker, that delights in Humane Carnage; For thus we read in *Q. Curtius*, that when they were in a great straight. , Sa- , crum quod quidem Diis minime Cordi esse Crediderim, jam , multis sæculis intermissum, repetendi quidem Autores erant. Which we may accommodate in the Translation thus, *Some there were that perswaded the State to Revive an old and obsolete Statute, which since the time of Ancient Persecutions had lyen Dormant, and*

so

to sacrifice Freemen to the Common safety; but for my part, though you count me a Heathen Writer; I can never believe, according to those notions I have of the Gods, that such Cruelties were ever acceptable to their Deities. I would have Peace upon any terms that are Reasonable, but *to part with all that in Religion*, which he shall say is *no essential part of it*, is a very hard Chapter. We may chop off a mans Legs, Arms, put out his Eyes, cut off his Nose, and yet though thus miserably dismembered and mangled in *his Integrals*; his *essential parts*, Body and Soul remain: Thus he may cut off even what he pleases of Religion, *all Worship, all Sacraments*, all Discipline, and leave us but *Faith, Hope and Charity*, there's as much as is essential to our Salvation, and then dispose of the rest.

To this, or some other, or no purporse at all he quotes us *Greg. Nazianzen.* Who asks us this Question: τί τοῦ ἡμετέρου λόγου κάλλιστον; *What's far more beautiful then our own Reason?* And he Answers: Εἰ ῥήνη προσθήσω δ' ὅτι καὶ λυσιτελέστατον. *Nay I will add, the most profitable too.* We were made to believe page 126. That *no man* (in *England*) *is bound to give away his Reason for quietness sake*: But now four pages further, Peace is far more *beautiful and useful then our own Reason*: How shall we reconcile these cross Capers? Why, *Qui bene distinguit, bene respondet.* Then he was commending the Moderation of the Church of *England* in opposition to *Rome*. How that Imperious Lady that sits on the seven hills, Hectors the World out of *their Reason, and common Sense*; and then *Reason was more precious then Peace*; but now he's arguing the Non-conformists into obedience, and then *Peace is more precious then Reason.*

To the same purpose he gives us that excellent counsel of the Apostle, 12 *Rom.* 18. *If it be possible, as much as in you lyes, live peaceably with all men.* Admirable advice it is, God grant us grace to take it. And truly the Non-conformists can live peaceably with all the World, if they might be let alone, but its not in their power to prescribe Terms to others, but to receive them. *Leges à victoribus dari, à victis Accipi*, said *Cæsar*: If then reasonable Terms be offered us, we will accept, and love them: If unreasonable, we will refuse, and love them. If we be taken into the circle of their Charity, we will love them; if we be excluded, yet still we love them: *Amabo & si Nolis, Amabo & si Nolim ipse.* We will love whether they will accept our love, and thank us for it or no: Nay we will love them whether our own exasperating sufferings will perswade us, or no; that is, we will follow them with a Christian affection, in spight of their teeths, and of our own. But this εἰρηνεύειν, to *live, converse peaceably*, perhaps may be *Impossible*, and the Apostle we see will not tye us up to *Impossibles*: Now sinful Conditions create *a Moral impossibility*; for *id tantum possumus quod jure possumus.*

I confess it cost me a Smile when I read his improvement of the

the Apostles exhortation. *Surely* (says he) *he did not mean we should only accept of Peace, when it's offered us for nothing, or be quiet till we can pick a quarrel, but that we should be at some cost to purchase it, and part with something for it*: The *old something* still! Why, we are willing to part with all our outward Concerns, we will give *skin upon skin*, will neither Gods Terms, nor the Devils please him? Only we would not part with our Consciences instructed from the Scriptures, the Soveraingty of Christ, the Perfection of the Written Word; and is all this Nothing?

But still he's at it again — *We must deny our selves something upon that account.* Why, we will take an Oath in the presence of Almighty God to *lead quiet and peaceable Lives* as become good Subjects, *in all godlinesse and honesty*; Will that serve to purchase our Peace? No! It must be something else, which before he acquaints us with, he will first prove the necessity of it; and thus he Reasons.

There are hardly (says he page 1 , 1.) *any two persons perfectly of the same apprehensions, or stature of understanding in the whole World. So much difference there is in mens Constitutions, such diversity of Education, such variety of Interests and Customs, and from hence so many prejudices and various Conceptions of things, that he that resolves to yeild to no body, can Agree with no body.* What now is to be done in this perplexed Case? Must we take our Constitutions in pieces? I doubt we shall never put them right together again; or must we have no Peace till all the propensities and inclinations, rooted and riveted in our Beings, Natures Temperaments, besides that second Nature growing out of Custome, be stormed? The Terms of Peace will be next to desperate this way. What then, must the prevailing party commit a Rape upon the intellectuals of the depressed Minority, and Marry them afterwards to make them amends: Yet still there is a Tower called *Assent and Consent*, can never be forced by assault. What then, must the lesser number openly profess themselves Convinced, and make Recantations before they have cause for't? Alas this is but to Proselyte a few Hypocrites, who are not worth the whistling! Or must *we tarry till we come to Heaven, where we shall be of one mind?* Oh our *Enquirer* is not satisfied in that point to Plerophory, *some think so* indeed; but he wisely keeps his faith to himself. What course must we then steer? Why we must *castigate our heats, take in our sailes, lighten the ship, and offer sacrifice to the touchy Deities of reteived Custome and Vulgar Opinion*, with all the fine stuff you heard before: But surely there's an easier, cheaper, more honourable and Christian way then all these put together: To bear with one another, to leave judging, censuring, despising, persecuting; to leave men to those Sentiments which they have contracted from insuperable weakness, or less happy Education, whilst they are good men, good subjects, good Christians, sound in the Faith, and Worship God no worse then the Scripture commands them. And he that can-

cannot Indulge his brother found in the Fundamentals, and walking together with his brethren so far as he has attained, let him prate of peace till his Tongue akes, 'tis evident he would not purchase Peace with Shoobuckles.

The Apostle has recommended this expedient to us by his own example, 1 *Cor.* 9. 20, 21. which the *Enquirer* could see to quote, and not to understand. *Unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; To them that were without the Law as without Law (being not without Law to God, but under the Law to Christ) that I might gain them that are without the Law; To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak. I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.* It seems the Blessed Apostle had not yet learnt to snickle *the private Conscience*, with his *publick Authority*.

That which he quotes from *Greg. Naz.* is indeed more considerable to his design: Who *affirms how St.* Basil *dissembled the Consentiality of the Holy Ghost, and delivered himself in Ambiguous Terms on that point, least he should offend and loose the weak.* The Reader will conclude by these instances, that though the *Enquirers* designly open to condemn the Dissenters, yet his Mediums do strongly plead their Cause: We are illustrated with *an Apostle*, with a famous *Bishop*, both eminent for their Condescentions to the weak, such as laid not the stress of the Churches Peace upon their own Wills, or Apostolical power, or Ecclesiastical Authority, nor defined too severely Controverted points; and yet when he comes to the Application, the duty of yelding is pressed upon the Dissenters: Whose coming up in a hundred points were perfectly insignificant, unless they could nick the very *circumstance* of Canon-Conformity. I would ask the *Enquirer* whether the Dissenters ever pleaded to be gratified in so weighty a point as *the Consentiality of the Holy Spirit*? Or whether Ambiguity, or a handsome equivocation there, must be *one of those things we must give for Peace*; If neither of these, he might have spared *Basil*, if not for our sake, yet for his own. And out of all these excellent Materials we expected he should have composed a Speech to the Reverend Bishops.

My Lords! *I have humbly set before your discerning judgments the great example, of the Great St.* Basil. *and the greater instance of the famous Dr: of the Gentiles, persons, whose Authority in the Church and wisdom to manage that Authority, was (without disparagement) equal to the same Qualifications in your Lordships; And yet their hearts so humble, when their places were so high, their Condescentions greater then their Exaltations, carries somewhat in it of that Divinity which bespeaks your Imitation. They would become all things to all men, though sin to none; They were ambitious to win the weak by Meekness, and not to wound the weak by Majesty. The way of Peace lyes plain before you, stoop to them in things Indifferent, who cannot rise to you in what they call sinful, your yelding to the weak will be your strength. And whilst you gain tender Consciences to the Church, you will gain*

Immortal honour to your selves. Let it be the glory of your lives, that you have made up our Breaches, and not the Epitaph of your Tombs; That the way of Peace you have not known.

He comes now to the Grand example indeed, that of our Blessed Saviour, which if it be but faithfully alledged, and Congruously applyed, must silence all dispute, and conquer the most restif reluctancy, Let us then hear how Christs example leads us to Conform.

1. *Christ complied with the Rites and Customs he found*; What, right or wrong? 'Tis true! he complied with those he found, because he found such Rites and Customs as were warranted by the Law. He was *Circumcised*. True, *It became him to fulfil all Righteousness*. He did eat *the Passeover*. Very true! *He was made under the Law*. He wore their Garments, spoke their Language. No doubt of it; He was a Jew by Birth, and approved himself a *Minister of the Circumcision for the truth of God*.

2. *He condescended to the very humours of that stubborn people*. True! Not by Imitating them; not *assuming the person of a Jewish Zealot*, but mildly reproving their irregularities; He came not in the blustering *Whirlwind*, nor in the terrible Earthquake, but in the *still small voice* of *Evangelical Meekness*. He came not to *break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoaking flax*; but rebuked his mistaken Disciples that they understood not the *spirit of the Gospel*, nor what a temper it called for, that they must needs fetch *fire from Heaven, to Consume* the truly *Schismatical Samaritans*; when they should rather have *Castigated their own hearts, and calmed their own passions*, which were kindled from a *worse fire*: I expect still how he will accommodate this Condescention of our *Blessed Saviour* to his purpose; for either the Dissenters must be *those stubborn people*, and then if the Clergy will imitate their Lord and Master, they must *condescend to their very Humours*, or else Dissenters must in imitation of Christ condescend to the Clergy, and then it supposes *them* to be *the stubborn and inflexible party*. Besides Condescention in Inferiours to Superiours, will be very improper Language.

3. *He used their phrase in his Discourse*. And the Non-conformists speak as proper English as their Wit serves them, that they cannot Adorn their conceptions, or cloath their thoughts in thunder-[illegible]ping Phraseology, may perhaps be their *Misery*, but certainly *not their Sin*.

4. *He observed their Feasts*. We Question it not; *He came to do his Fathers will*, and amongst other particulars, that also of observing what ever Ordinance was of Divine Institution: But the Reader must know, here's a secret Argument couch't in these words against Non-conformity; which I will ingenuously own, and 'tis this: The Jews had instituted a Feast in Memory of *the Dedication of the Temple*. Now this Festival had not the character of *Divine Institution*; and yet this Feast our Saviour solemnized, and who then can be so refractory as not to observe the *Holy-Dayes*, and consequently *all other Humane Constitutions*,

tions, which bear *no direct Repugnancy to the Law of God*? I shall neither *assert* at present that this Festival had *Divine Warrant*, nor *deny* that it was properly of a *Religious Nature*, but this I return, That it appears not that our Saviour performed *any Act*, or spoke *any Word*, that may be interpreted, or Construed an approbation of that practise. All that appears is from 10 *Joh.* 22, 23. *And it was at* Jerusalem *the Feast of the Dedication, and it was Winter, and Jesus walked in* Solomons *porch*: How shall we draw in Christs conformity from these words? It *was Winter*; Ergo Jesus approved the Feast. *He walked in* Solomons *porch*: Ergo, he condescended to that usage! The business was no more then this: *Christ went up and down doing good*, and seeking all occasions for that great end of his coming into the World: Where most Fishes were, there he threw his Net; where the greatest Confluence of People were gathered, there he preached: He took them where he could find them; they would not come to him, he would go to them; whatever was the Lawfulness of that Feast, or the occasion of their assembly, Christ could make a Holy advantage of it, to preach the Gospel for their Salvation.

5 *He made his own Institutions of Baptism and the Lords Supper as Consonant to their Customs as 'twas possible.* A notable Instance it was of his Condescension, if it was but true; but I am afraid we shall not be so happy as to see clear evidence of it; which is therefore to be lamented, because our *Enquirer* will miss an Advantage of charging Dissenters with *Judaizing in the Sacraments*. But I will promise him thus much? when Non-conformists have a Commission from Heaven to Institute Sacraments, they shall, if I can prevail, make them *as Consonant to all honest Customs as 'tis possible*; but till then I hope he will not be displeased that we regulate all our Customs by Christs Commands, and not warp his Commands to our Customs.

6. *He would not disturbe them with Novelty, but ingratiated himself and his Doctrine by these complyances.* I have but one answer to these Objections. Let him be imitated. Let all that profess the name of Christ, so far evidence the sincerity of their profession, as not to torment mens Consciences with New fangles, nor vex an Age (wearied with contending, and willing to be quiet) with Novel Inventions: Let all Junior observances be reduced to the sacred Rule and Rubrick, and then we shall all conform and joyn cheerfully in the Antiphonie; *As it was in the Beginning, so it is now, and ever shall be, World without end.*

7. *When a certain Tribute was demanded of him, he first proves he was not obliged to pay it; yet least he should offend them, determines to pay it, and works a Miracle to enable* Peter *to pay it.* An unanswerable Argument that Non-conformists are not exempted *from Taxes and Subsidies*: But what's their *Coine* to their *Consciences*? It may seem a piece of unpardonable boldness to say that Dissenters go beyond this pattern: And yet 1. they plead no Immunity from Assessments, Nor 2. pay their Levies

meerly to *avoid offence*, but out of sence of *their duty*. Nor 3. can they raise Money so easie as *by Miracle*, they are glad to work hard for it; and yet they endeavour to get their Silver ready against it be called for; and if their *Persons*, *or Purses* may serve their Prince, they know nothing too precious for his service, that under the Auspices of his Gracious Government, they may *lead a quiet and peaceable life in all Godlinesse and Honestly*.

And now let the *Enquirer* cast up his Accounts, and see what he has gained *De claro*, by all these great examples? The Apostle who was *strong in the Faith*, parted with something of his Liberty, *to please and gain the weak*; therefore the weak must part with *their Consciences*, wherein they have *no liberty*, to gratifie *the strong*: Jesus Christ, who was *the Lord of Worship*, accommodated his Ordinances to the Jewish Customs, therefore the Non-conformists who have *no power over worship*, may accommodate their practices in Worship to the present Customs &c. Basil *concealed his judgment* in a great Truth: Therefore Non-conformists may *subscribe* what they judge *a falsehood*.

From the publick instances our *Enquirer* at last Appeals to our Consciences. *Let me Appeal* (says he) *to the Consciences of men, is it not plain from hence, that although I be perswaded that such a certain Rite is less commendable in it self, yet if it appear to be an Instrument of Accommodation, that it is therefore in that Case best on that Account?* These *Retrogade Appeals* from *the publick Judgment* to the *private Conscience* are wholy irregular; yet since he has *appealed to Conscience, to Conscience he shall go*; whose determination in the case, if it may be heard speak, is this; That it is plain from those Instances, that if any rite *in it self indifferent*, shall prove an *Instrument of Distraction, and Division*, it's just upon that account to abolish it, but his Appeal was not drawn Clerk-like: for the competition, and contest is not amongst us, between *one Mystical Ceremonie*, and *another*, but between *Ceremonies*, and *no Ceremonies*; If the Controversie were about a meer circumstance of time, or place, or the Natural cloathing of a Religious Action; As whether the publick worship shall Commence at Nine, or ten a clock. or whether it shall be celebrated in a house of Timber or stone, in which Determination the *Worshippers* may perhaps suffer *some Inconveniences*, but the *worship it self* no *prejudice*, seeing we must worship our God *at some time*, and *some place*, we can have no concern for stiffness or abstinacy; but when the Controversy shall be about such Rites, which being neither in *general commanded*, nor in their *individuals expressed*, do enter into the worship it self, as an Integral part of that Devotion which we present to the divine Majesty, we say such Rites are sinful, on this side the Command of a Church, and can be no fit Instruments of Accommodation.

After many an Impertinent paragraph, The *Enquirer* starts a New Question, which, though I never once dream't of it, shall have that attendance it deserves. *If I am perswaded that such*

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an opinion is more true, then that which is publickly owned, (so long as the main doctrine of Christianity is not in dispute) may I not rather conceal it, then disturb the Church? The case is I confess before a meer Casuist, and the best assistance I can contribute to it's Resolution, is to recommend him to the Apostle. 14. Ro. 22. *Hast thou Faith; have it to thy self before God!* upon which Text our *Enquirer* descants notably. 1. *By* faith *in the Text* (says he) *the Apostle means not* the Doctrine of Christianity. *For then the Meaning should be*, That he that understands the great Doctrine of Christianity *should conceal it*: well, but what hurt in a concealement? St. *Basil* was just now applauded, for *dissembling the Coessentiality of the H. Spirit*: which, if the Athanasian Creed say true, is one of the great Doctrines, of Christianity, *necessary to be believed for salvation*. 2. *By Faith* (says he) *is not meant* the Habit *of saving Faith*: we Agree to it! And are glad he can find such a thing as *a Habit of saving Faith*. 3. *By* Faith *is meant only a perswasion of the Lawfulness of such a thing in it self indifferent*. I shall not contradict, yet let me say. 1. That though it be a Confessed Truth, that *Celare verum interdum licet*, yet 'tis as true, *prascribere falsum nunquam licet*: Though I may conceal a Truth sometimes, I may never assert a falshood. I may forbear to say there are *Antipodes*, yet may I not say, or subscribe, or swear there are none, and yet these are none of the essentials of our Religion. Negative precepts bind us *semper*, and *ad semper*; that is, there can be no case put *wherein*, no time assign'd when it may be Lawful to deny or renounce the smallest Truth, or violate the least of Gods commands by my practise. 2. Though I may conceal my judgment, or suspend my practise, in some of these lesser matters, yet when a sweet concurrence of inviting Circumstances shall call for my asserting that truth, or practising that duty, I am then to assert the one, and practise the other. In some cases I may wave an Explicite Profession, or open practise, when such forbearance shall be compensated with *a greater Good*, when *a little Time* shall pay *the Truth, and Gods Glory*, Interest, and make amends, for the *lucrum Cessans*, and *damnum emergens*, the Spiritual loss sustained, or Spiritual advantage delayed 3. Though I may conceal, or suspend as aforesaid, yet I ought not to give away my Christian liberty, nor commit any Act, or Acts, that may destroy my future claim, or be pleaded in Bar to my right. 4. When the Consciences of Christians are notoriously hazarded by my silence, or forbearance, when I am in danger of betraying my Brother to Errour, or hardening Another in his, I have need of much wisdom and prudence how to speak and act, but speak, and Act I ought; for it's a most monstrous cheat, to urge *the Manner of a duty*, against *the Duty it self*; As that because I ought to *Act prudently*, that therefore I ought to *sit still*. 5. I am much dissatisfied how it should follow from hence, what he makes his conclusion: That *we may change any Rite or Ceremony that we have a great kindness for, for one more grateful to others*:

Nay, if Any Ceremony I have in my worſhip not Commanded by Chriſt, may do him a kindneſs, I have no ſuch kindneſs for it as to diſoblige him, nor ſhall he need to ſend me back one of his beloved ones in Exchange, I ſhall never feel the want of it. But now the Reader muſt be entreated to uſe his eyes: The Aſſertion was that *it is Lawful to Conceal my opinion (when the main Doctrine of Chriſtianity is not in diſpute) rather then diſturb the peace of the Church*: from whence he would wiſely infer, therefore we may practiſe Ceremonies, which I am either fully ſatisfied are ſinful, or not fully ſatisfied that they are Lawful: for this is the upſhot: — *That we may comply with the Laws in being, ſo they be not palpably Contrary to the Scriptures or Common Reaſon*; It very amazing to me, that I cannot conceal what I think true, unleſs I muſt aſſert what I judge falſe: nor bite in my ſentiments about Anothers unlawful practiſe, but I muſt practiſe with him: I may ſuppreſs my judgment that ſuch a thing is ſinful, and yet not dare to deliver my judgment that it is Lawful. He that Commanded me *not to judge* my brother, did not command me *to Imitate* him.

It muſt not be overlook't, what an *Emphaſis* he lays upon this word *Palpably*, we may comply with the Laws, ſo they be not *Palpably* contrary to the Scriptures. And p. 11. It muſt be An *Apparent breach* of the divine law, that gives juſt cauſe of ſeparation. And p. 118. Conditions of Communion that are not *Expreſly* ſinful, and ſuch wherein there is not a *Plain neceſſity*, and *Certainty* of ſin in Compliance, are juſtified. *Sinful Terms*, will not juſtify ſeparation, unleſs they be *Apparently*, *Expreſly* ſo. Nor will *a ſinful Command* warrant my non-obedience, unleſs it be *Palpably* ſuch. It muſt be ſome *groſs impiety*, which like the Egyptian darkneſs may *be felt*: Thus if I be prohibited *to partake of the Lords Supper*, oftner then once in three, four or ſeven years, I muſt pocket up the wrong, becauſe here's no palpable, apparent, expreſs violation of the law of God. The Law ſays indeed, *As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup*: but has not determin'd *how often*. As one of your Roman Caſuiſts determines, that we are not bound *actually* to love God above *once in three years*; And Another thinks, *once in a Mans life* will ſerve the turn, provided we do not down-right *Hate him*: becauſe the Command of *Loving God*, is an affirmative præcept, which binds indeed *ſemper*, but not *ad ſemper*. And if all the Rabble Rout of Popiſh Ceremonies were Commanded, and five times as many more, yet theſe will not juſtify non-obedience, becauſe (forſooth) they are not *expreſly* forbidden, by Name, nor *palpably* contrary to any one Text of Scripture.

And to conclude, the Reader ſhall now know at a word *the Loweſt price of Peace*. That *we part with all that, which is no eſſential point of our Religion, for Charity, which is*. This is the Loweſt penny, take it, or Leave it, try the world, and mend your ſelves, where you can. But 1. It's *palpably ridiculous*, to oppoſe

Charity

Charity to any *point*, or *part of Religion*: As if charity, which is Commanded by *the principles* of our Religion, should croſs *thoſe principles*: Charity Commands *a Religious perſon* to ſtoop to all in his private concerns, but requires not that Any *Principle of Religion* ſhould ſtoop to it. 2. It's weakly ſuppoſed, that it's *the Concern of Charity*, that we be of one uniform practiſe in the Minutes of Religion, when her higheſt, and nobleſt exerciſe is to Embrace thoſe that differ from us in ſinleſs practiſes. For I cannot yet underſtand, what Intereſt Evangelical Love has to reduce us to an uniformity in Rites, and Ceremonies; And do know that Proteſtants who differ in the leſſer points of Religion, as to principle, and practiſe, do yet maintain a more entire and cordial love amongſt themſelves, then the Papiſts who are cudgelled by the Iron rod of the Inquiſition into a preciſe Indentity, in their little ſopperies.

Did we never hear of two friends that could really love each other with the moſt endeared affections, though their cloaths were not made by the ſame Taylor! nor trim'd up with the ſame Ceremonies of Ribbonds, and Lace; Let the worſhippers of Mahomet quarrel about their Green, and Red Turbants, yet Chriſtian Kingdoms can hold firm peace, and Inviolate Amity, without Aboliſhing their reſpective Country Cuſtoms: The Iriſh in one of our Kings Reigns could not be perſwaded nor forced to leave their odd way of plowing, and threſhing out their grain, and yet that prudent Prince never ſent *Talus* amongſt them with his *Iron flail* to threſh them into a Compliance with more Decent, and uſeful manners. 3. This Diſtinction of the points of Religion into *Accidental*, *or Circumſtantial*, Integral, and eſſential, (or however elſe they pleaſe to Marſhal it) had need be well, warranted, ſufficiently clearly, carefully limited, and diſtinctly butted, and bounded; that we may Exactly ſee where the *Circumſtantials end*, and the *Integrals* begin, and where the *Integrals* expire, and the *eſſentials* Commence, or we may ſoon be diſtinguiſht out of all our Religion: for under the covert of ſuch arbitrary diſtinctions Rome has already rooted out much of Religion within her Quarters.

She confeſſes that Chriſt did inſtitute both *the Eating of the Bread*, and the *Drinking of the Cup*; but withal affirms, that He that eats *the fleſh of Chriſt*, receives *the Blood per concomitantiam*. Drinking is *not Eſſential* to the Sacrament, and therefore ſhe has upon prudential grounds, (as ſhe thinks) appropriated that Moity to the Prieſts, who need it moſt, and love it beſt: And in the judgment of *Grotius*, Both Bread, and wine may be ſpared, as he Learnedly Determines upon that Queſtion. *An ſemper communicandum per Symbola?* And 'tis but ſuitable to what he endeavours to evince (as our *Enquirer* cites him pag. 163) *That the Magiſtrate Exceeds not his Commiſſion when he interpoſes, for the Determination of the Circumſtantials of Religion.* And ſeeing *bread and wine* in his judgment are *not eſſential* to that Ordinance; By his own, and our Au-

thors principles, the Magiſtrate may (for ſome time at leaſt) prohibite both: for if the Magiſtrate has a power from God to Determine the Circumſtantials, he muſt be ſuppoſed, to be Judge what are ſo, and thus we may have all our Religions Juſtitutions diſtinguiſh't, and determined away in a Moment. For though at preſent whilſt we are under the care of faithful Governours, we are ſecure of the *eſſentials*; yet we have granted A principle in *this Generation*, which may utterly Eradicate all poſitive and inſtituted worſhip *in the Next*; And we hold all the Ordinances of Chriſt upon precarious Terms; that is, we are fiduciaries of that grand *Depoſitum*, till ſome men ſhall pleaſe to call for it, and then like the *Traditores* of old, muſt reſign and betray the concerns of the Goſpel.

[3] He is now entering upon his Third Labour; which is to prove; That *the Things in Difference* are *of ſuch a Nature, as may be fit to become a peace-offering, and ſacrificed to the Magiſtrate, the Laws, and the Church.* For the proof of which he will *give us theſe five following Remarkes.*

(1) *That the things now ſcrupled in this Church are ſuch as were heretofore ſubmitted to, by the moſt Leading-men of thoſe that now depart from it:* To which I ſhall very briefly return theſe few particulars. 1. That the Non-conformiſts are *not led by Men*, further then as they have Authority in the Name of Chriſt to Lead them. The Leaders or Paſtors diſclaim all other conduct, then by Goſpel direction; their power is Miniſterial, not Deſpotical, And their people diſclaim *all ſuch Leaders*, as would Lord it over their faith, and take away the Judgment of Diſcretion over their own Acts. It's a very uncomely ſight to behold a Drove of Rational Creatures with their Conſciences Tayled to one fere horſe, and ſo conducted to *a Faire*, there to be ſold for *peace, and Expediency.* 2. With equal Reaſon the Diſſenters will plead, That the worſhip which they now uſe, is the very ſame that was lately uſed, and practiſed by ſome of the moſt Leading-men Amongſt the Conformiſts; And is it not a wonder that whether men go backwards or forwards, yet both ſhall form an Argument for Conformity. If they have *ſometimes been Non-conformiſts*, and are now reclaimed, that ſhall conclude for Conformity, becauſe they muſt be ſuppoſed to have their eyes Anointed with ſome excellent *Collyrium*, and to ſee better; If they were once Conformiſts, and become at laſt Diſſenters, yet that will conclude full as well for Conformity, becauſe they once ſaw better: ſuch ſhuffling arguments would with equal Truth ſerve the occaſions of the Diſſenters too. Many of the *Conformiſts* were once *Non conformiſts*, and therefore we are no worſe now, then they were then; and Many of the Non-conformiſts were once Conformiſts, and therefore having tryed the difference are more competent Judges which way of worſhip is neareſt the Rule. And though both theſe ways of Reaſoning are none of the beſt, yet if there be any Advantage, the latter carries it: becauſe there can be no ſuch Arguments from *worldly Intereſt* the *one way*, which

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may possibly have a stroke *the of other*; few are Ambitious to be *starved*, and as few that are so irreconcilable to preferments. 3. Not former Apprehensions, but present Light into the mind of God from his word, ought to be our Immediate, and next Director in our worship of him: Men may change, as times and external Accidents change, but the Rule of Religion is *unchangeable, and abides for ever.*

(1) *Some Non-conformists daily come over to the Church, and those none of the Meanest for Ability, or piety: but let them brag of any one if they can find him, that hath since the resettlement of the Church apostatized to them.* The Dissenters send back the Challenge, let them brag of any one if they can find him that has *Apostatiz'd* to them. But yet I shall say a little more.

§. 1. It's no wonder to hear of few conversions to *a persecuted Profession.* It must be a deep Impression of Duty to God, and a violent respect to the Reward of Another World, that will prevail with flesh, and Blood to set it's face against the blustring wind of Opposition, and rowe against the impetuous Current of General Example. Men are not easily induced to close in with that worship, which will not only prejudice, but Ruine their Temporal Concerns. It's ordinary to see Secular advantages to Command the Minds of many, but no turning to A Reproached Reformation, but what arises from clear and irresistible convictions. All the Avenews to preferment, all the Passes to a Livelyhood are so strictly guarded, that men of parts whose Educations have promised them the outward Rewards of Ingenuity, and learning, are sometimes necessitated to sowze over head and ears into Compliance at first Dash; All Arguments are Drowned in the Noyse of a Croaking belly, and Hungry stomacks swallow first, and leave it to the strength of Nature to Concoct all as well as it can. Nay, from the Good old woman at the Towns-end, that teaches the *Criss-cross-rowe* to the *Bellsray Schoolmaster*, and so upwards, all the places of Education are tinctur'd with Conformity; Every paisny is taught first to swim with Bladders, that at last he may venture alone; first to Act without knowledge, and then with it, or Against it, like the *Crotonian Milo*, who first carried the *sucking calff*, till by gradual essays he could Carry it when *a Bull*. Thus Traps of temptation must needs take, when they are baited at both ends, *great Necessities* and *great Preferments*.

§. 2. This Argument is borrow'd. or stollen from *the Papists*, who use and urge it every day against *the Protestants*; I shall propound and Answer it in the words of *Monsieur de la Motte*. In his late *Motives to his conversion*: p. 108. 109. *D'où vient donc (disent ils) qu'il y a si peu de personnes qui quittent la Religion Romaine? & que, de ceux qui l'ont quittée pour embrasser la Protestante, on en voit une grande partie, qui y retournent, & qui font, comme on dit, leur Recantation? Whence comes it (say the Romanists) that so few quit the Roman Religion? and that of those who have forsaken it, to embrace that of the Protestant, we see many that Return back, and as we say make their Recantation?* To which he gives this Answer. *Je pourrois alleguer mille Raisons particulieres pour lesquelles, plusieurs illustres*

Protestans ont quitté leur Religion en France, qui n'est plus à la mode, (dit on) en ce Païs-là, & ont embrassé la Romaine, je dis seulement en general, ce qu'il est facile de remarquer dans les particulieres, que c'est l'interest, qui les meut & les retient, qui les fait changer, & qui les empêche de rechanger. *I could give a thousand particular Reasons, for which some eminent Protestants have quitted their Religion in France, which, say they, is Now no longer the mode in our Country; and have Embraced the Romain Faith: But I only say this in general, which is very easy to Observe in the particulars. That it is meer Interest that Allures them first, and then fixes them; That makes them change, and then hinders them from a Rechange. The pension of a thousand Crowns* (as he goes on) *which they promised a Minister, in Case he will renounce his calling, is a most violent temptation.*

§. 3. I could tell the *Enquirer* of those that have deserted their station in the Church of England, and have given their Reasons for it, and embraced a persecuted Reformation: I could tell him of many young Schollers eminent for piety and learning, who have rather chosen a retired estate and mean Condition, then those allurements, which would make many a mouth water at them. But *let every man stand or fall to his own Master*; I am not qualified to judge either way, but this I will say, that whosoever shall Reason the one way or other, will find his Argument Inconclusive, and I have known so much in my small Observation, and known some men too well, then either to be much Confirmed in my judgment by their *presence*, or flagger'd by their *Absence*.

(3) *There are men of as clear understanding, as good life, and as Comfortable consciences, in the society of this Church, as are any where else to be found.* And if I should say, there are Persons of as *clear understanding, as good life, and as Comfortable consciences* in the society of the Non-conformists, as are any where else to be found, I should discover a vanity equal to that of *the Enquirer*. I cannot be of every mans Religion, that is of *a much clearer understanding* then my self, unless I resolve to be of twenty Contradictory Religions at once: Nor can I judge it my duty to Imitate every one of *a holy life*, further then *in his Holiness*: Nor of every mans way that pretends to a *Comfortable Conscience* in his way, because I see some *fitch in Comfort* to their Consciences from the greatest *provocations*, or grossest *delusions*; Besides it's no part of the *clearness of mens understandings*, to be wiser then *the Scriptures*, or to study Reasons, why they ought to destroy all that are not of the same Intellectual stature with themselves. Nor does it add to their *Holiness*, that they can persecute others whose lives are *Holy*; Nor to the solid Comfort of their Consciences, that they endeavour to weaken the Comfort of other mens; and I will further add, that since my own Conscience can only directly witness *to my self*, it can never be allowed Credence with Another, if I deny it its proper work, and Office in Another. But we have met with this *Braggadochian*

dochian Pyrgopolinias before, whether the Reader is referred, if at least he shall judge so inconsiderable a Trifle to merit further Consideration.

(4) *The things objected against this Church are but at most disputable Matters, because all wise and good men are not Agreed upon them, but that which is sub judice, and yet under dispute, cannot be called evil, till the dispute is ended, and the decision made against it*: To which I crave leave to Answer. 1. That then some of the greatest and most important points in Religion must be called disputable, seeing all wise men, and some good men are not Agreed upon them. 2. If the matters be still *sub judice*, and cannot be called evil till the dispute be ended; why are the Nonconformists *Executed* before *condemnation*? for I hope he arrogates no such *partial Tribunal* to himself, that the things in controversy, shall be reputed *undecided* when he would *justify the one*, and yet *decided* when he would *Condemn the other*. 3. We say the things are already decided by Scripture long ago, if that may be Judge, and if any other Judge be set up, the Condemned party will appeal thether as the Highest Court of Judgment in matters relating to Conscience and the Immediate worship of God, where alone they ought to be Judged.

(5) *The things scrupled in this Church are such as the like may be found, and Complained of in any Church of the whole world, at least since the Apostles times.* To which I say, 1. That I have been too much beaten to the Game, then to be Overborn by the *Enquirers* Daring Confidence, and do smoothly deny the Matter of Fact. Many particular Churches may be found at this day, where *Mystical Ceremonies* are not found, much less made the Terms of Communion. But he has two wide Creep holes at which he will escape. 1. That we *choose with National Church we will*: It seems then *A particular Church*, and a *National Church* are Terms that Measure each other. And thus if we instance in the Ancient *Albigenses*, *Waldenses*, or the present *French Churches*, he may reject the issue, because *they are* not *National Churches*. And all the Churches for three hundred years after Christ, because they were not National. 2. He will undertake this taske. *If he may have the History and knowledg of that Church*, whatever it be or was since the Apostles times, *as we have of this*. I Commend his discretion, *Enquirer* knows it difficult to get the Church-History of other National Churches, so full as we have of our own.

2. If the Churches *in the Apostles times* had none of these things now scrupled, we shall rather chuse, and such choise is our Duty, to Conform to their patterns then any junior and more green-headed Constitutions. They are the Apostolical times and Churches, of whose constitutions we have infallible Records which we propound for our Exemplars, and he will be tryed by Any Others, if we will hate him them, for which we thank him. I am now expecting a serious Proposition, and he sends us this offer: *That since there is no Grand Matter of Reli-*

gion concerned in the Controversies between us, nor any violation of the Laws of God in our Complying with the Laws of this Society, and since Mahomet must either go to the Mountain, or the Mountain must come to Mahomet, i. e. one side or other must yeeld; we will be perswaded to think it reasonable, that the subject should submit to the Governour, and opinion give place to ancient Custom, and Novelty to the Laws in being. This is his friendly Motion, and one so Modest, that we would be *perswaded* to think it *reasonable*. If he had given us *Reasonable* arguments to *be perswaded*; which that he has not I think is Evident from what has been already said, with these further Considerations.

§. 1. That his *motion* is grounded on a false suggestion, That there's *no grand matter of Religion concern'd in the Controversie, nor any Law of God violated by our Complyance*: for the Perfection of the Scriptures as the Rule of Faith, worship, and Church-Government, is a Grand matter of Religion, and greatly concern'd in this Dispute. The Soveraignty of Christ over his Church, His compleat discharge of all his Offices, His Kingly Office in Making Laws, his Prophetical in revealing the whole mind of God, is no small matter of Religion, and greatly concern'd also in this dispute: which Law-giver, by his Express Law, and Royal Edict has Commanded all his true Ministers, 28. Math. 19. 20. *To Disciple all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, Son, and holy Ghost; Teaching them to Observe whatsoever he has Commanded them*; Adding a gracious promise of his special assisting presence in this work, That he would *be with them always unto the end of the world*: we think that the Terms of enjoying all the Ordinances of Christ, is but *Observing whatsoever Christ has Commanded*: which Law is *apparently, expressly, palpably* violated (to use his own expressions) when any thing else or less or more is made *the Condition of our admittance into the Kingdom of Christ*.

§. 2. I know no Reason why any party should be the *Immoveable Mountain*, that is too stiff in the hams to Come to Christ; I have ever judged Christ him self to be *that Mountain*, to which *Mahomet* and all Pretenders ought to move. It was Noted as a piece of arrogant Morosenes in *Austin the Monk*, that he would stir no more then a *Mountain* to meet the *British Christians* half way in an Amicable Association: But if the Church will needs be the Mo[illegible], yet let her remember that Christ is set upon *that Holy hill*, and if she will not Move in Deference to his Authority, He that touches the Mountains and they smoak, and makes the Hills to tremble, can by his Almighty power send such an Earth-quake in her bowels, as may cause her to yeeld to Reason.

§. 3. Though *Opinion, and Custom* may fight it out for me; yet let the proudest Ancient Custom bow down to the institutions of Christ. It has ever been as *a Common*, so a *successful Policy* to clap *hoary Periwigs* upon *juvenile innovations*, to conciliate some Reverence to their *Antique Looks*: Errour has often *a more wrinkled face then Truth*, but Truth alway's Carries

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the Graver aspect. They that Imp their pin-feather'd inventions with plumes borrowed from Time's wings, do not Teach them to fly, but flutter, Antiquity is like Romulus his Asylum, whese all pursued Corruptions take sanctuary; 'Tis the grand Borrough, and safe Retreat of superstition, when ferretted out of her Lurking-holes of Counterfeit Reason. He can say very little for his opinion, that cannot plead *Antiquity, Custom*, and such like Mormo's: Thus the Aquarian Heretieks pleaded Custom to use water mingled with wine, in the Eucharist, whose folly Cyprian thus Censures. ,,Victi ratione, opponunt consuetudinem; ,quasi Consuetudo Major esset veritate. Being beaten at the weapon of Reason, they fetch out the old Rusty sword of Custom; As if such a Bilbao sword durst try its edge against the tryed scimitar of Truth: such a roat does Tertullian give these childish pretences. ,Consuetudo ab aliqua ignorantiâ, vel simplicitate initiam ,sortita, in usum per successionem Corroboratur; & ita ad- ,versus veritatem vindicatur. sed Dominus Noster Jesus Christus, ,veritatem se, non Consuetudinem cognominavit: Hæreses non ,tam Novitas, quam veritas revincit. quodcunque adversus ve- ,ritatem sapit, erit hæresis, etiam vetus consuetudo. *A Custom of Base and dunghil Extract, yet gaining some Repute by Long usage, and prescribing for it's gentility time out of mind, grows sawcy, and Malapert against Truth it self: But our Lord Jesus Christ called himself by the Title of Truth, not of Customs; The clearest conviction of Heresy is not by the leaden Lesbian Rule of Practise, but by the Golden Rule of the Scriptures.* Errour, is Errour still, and will be so, of plebeian Breed and Ignoble parentage, though it has purchased a coat of Armes, scrapes acquaintance with some Ancient families, and would make it out, that it came in with the Conquerour.

The Gibeonites Acted very subtlely, when they came to *Josua*, with *Old sacks upon their Asses, and wine-bottles old, and rent. and bound up, and old shoes, and clouted upon their feet, and all their provision dry, and mouldy as if they had come from far*, when all this while they were but their Next Neighbours. It's a pretty sight doubtless to see the State which the great *Czar of Muscovy* uses upon publick Festivals, and Entertainments; The great Chamber all beset with grave Personages Adorned with Ermines, and Gold from head to foot, dazling the weak eyes of vulgar spectators, and yet perhaps you shall find some of these *Knezzes* next day in their *Blue Aprons*, who shall think it no Empeachment of their late Glories to sell you a penny worth of Pepper; such a Masque we have presented to us of *old Customs*, all gorgeously attired like the Antediluvian *Patriarchs*, and when we come to examine them, they are little better then (to use our Authors expressions) *The Dictates of Ambition, the Artifices of gain, and a colluvies of almost all the superstitions, errours, and Corruptions, of former Ages.*

§ 4.

§. 4. Since there must be *a yeelding in order to peace*, then surely they have *all the Right*, *and Reason on their sides* to have the Honour of the Condescension. Who Confess that the Matters in difference are *Indifferent in themselves*. such as where in *no grand Matter of Religion is concerned*; rather then they who are bound up by *immoveable persuasions*, *that they are sinful*. 2. They who are most *Remote from the primitive simplicity*, and not they who have no higher Ambition. then to perform all things *which*, *and as* Christ has Commanded. 3. They who have made *the Additions*, which Cause *the Divisions*; and not they who only take up their Religion, as near as they can, as they found it delivered, and recommended to them, by the unerring word of God.

4. They who have *enough to spare*, and may part with some *excrescences*, and never touch *the Quid of Religion*, rather then they who own *a Naked Religion* without any Additaments, and if any such be found Amongst them, they are Content to surrender them up as a Sacrifice to peace.

5. They who by their Authority are Qualified to make a through Reformation, and such Abatements in supernumerary observations, such fillings up of the Chasmes, and vacuities, as may not only Retrieve peace at Home, but procure a General union with all the Reformed Churches abroad, to the strengthning of the Protestant Religion; weakning the hands of the Common Enemy; rather then those poor people, whose Circumstances are such that they cannot propose the Terms of peace to others, and what Alterations they shall make in themselves, will be insignificant to an universal settlement.

6. They who have already given some specimens of their Condescensions to the Romanists, by Removing some exasperating passages, and it may be hoped, and expected that they will take a few steps towards a Compliance with dissenting Protestants. For as the Author of the *Irenicum* observes well. p. 132. *That which was laid as a bait for them* (the Papists) *was never intended as a Hook for those of our own Profession*. And therefore to conclude this Chapter, I will take the freedom to Quote that Celebrated Son of the Church for a *Theological* Notion, whom he has already quoted for a *Philosophical* one. Dial. 5. p. 399. speaking of *the Papacy* as the Kingdom *of Anti-Christ*, he has those Notable words. *Which we knowing so experimentally, not to be Compassed by Needless Symbolizing with them, in any thing; I conceive our best policy is, Studiously to Imitate them in nothing; but for All indifferent things to think the worse of them for their using them. As no person of Honour would willingly go in the known garb of Any Lewd, and infamous person; whatsoever we court them in, they do but turn it to our scorn, and Contempt, and are the more hardned in their wickedness; wherefore seeing that Needless Symbolizing with them, does them no Good but Hurt, we should Account our selves in all things indifferent, perfectly free, to satisfy, and please in the most universal manner we can those of our own party; nor*

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Caring what opinions, or Customs, or outward formalities, the Romanists, or others have, or may have had from the first Degeneracy of the Church, which we ought to Account the more hideously soiled by the Romanists, using them; but supporting our selves upon plain Scripture, and solid Reason, to use, and prefer such things, as will be most Agreable to us All, and make most for the safety, and welfare of the Kingdom of Christ; for this undoubtedly. O Philopolis, *is the most firm, and true Interest of Any Protestant Church, or State whatsoever.*

CHAP. IV.

The vanity of the *Enquirers* Confidence noted; in boasting, *that they who find fault with the Churches Constitution, will never be able to find out, or agree upon a better:* his Reasonings about this matter examined.

IT was a piece of the *old Roman valour*, to kill themselves, for fear of being Killed; and it's a Considerable piece of the *New Roman piety*, not to stir, for fear of going out of the way, to Resolve against Reformation, upon some dangers which are fancied may attend Reformation: That Church always apprehending, or pretending to apprehend dreadful inconveniences in all changes, though apparently for the better.

Before we can possibly know, whether *A better way may be found out*, we must first be Agreed *what is a Good way*. Now *All Goodness* Consists in the *due Conformity* of a thing to it's *Rule* and *Idea* by which it ought to be measured; and it's *fitness* to reach that *end* to which it is *a Means*: And therefore *the betterness* of Any thing must be judged of by it's *nearer Approach* to that Rule, and it's *greater proportionableness* to the attainment of it's design: If then we could find out *A worship* more Agreable to *the Rule of worship*, or a Constitution more apt to reach *the great intendments of Holiness and Peace*, such a worship, such a Constitution will justify it self to be *a better*, then any of it's Competitors which shall Deviate from that Rule, or more uncertainly attain the Desired End.

(1) The first part of our task then will be to find out *our Rule*, which when we have done, we have nothing remaining but to apply that Rule to those Models which we would erect, or having erected, we would examine their Regularity. And as they shall be found to approach nearer, or depart farther from that Rule, we may Confidently pronounce they are therefore by so much *The better, or the worst*. Now the *only Rule* of Reformation,

tion, in our judgment, *is the Infallible word of God*: which we therefore judge sufficient and adæquat, because they give this Testimony to their own Perfection: And seeing we have now to do with those who own the Scriptures to assert *nothing but Truth*, it will be evidence enough that they are *such a Rule* if they do but *Assert* that they are so.

It is indeed no new thing to hear them charged as *Lame and defective*, such as must be pieced and eked out either with Immediate *Revelations*, or Humane *Traditions*, to render them a Compleat and perfect standard of our Faith, and acceptable obedience. To which we only oppose the Testimony of the Apostle, 2. Tim. 3. 16. 17. *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, for reproof, for Correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnisht unto all good works.* Concerning which sacred Rule, I will use our Authors Confidence with (I think) better warrant; *That they who find fault with this Rule will never be able to find out, or Agree upon a Better*; whereof the Endless mazes, the perplexed labyrinths into which they have cast themselves, who despising, and forsaking this only *Canon*, have delighted to find out by-paths, is very clear, but very sad demonstration; for when they have tryed *Traditions*, or gaped for *revelations*, or depended on the *Churches* Authority, and yet found no satisfaction, they think to secure themselves, and gratify the Magistrate with *a New power* who has already such burdens upon his shoulders, that we have more need incessantly to sollicite the throne of grace on his behalf for wisdom, Counsel, strength to manage, and bear them, then fondly to think to do him a kindness, by Impoſing upon him a greater work which all others are weary of.

But this one Text which I have mention'd, may abundantly satisfy us that there can be nothing requisite to equise, and furnish out A *Christian*, A *Minister*, A *Church* for Duty, and obedience, but what is summarily therein ascribed to the written word.

§. 1. That the Scriptures are of unquestionable Authority to Determine all those Controversies whereof they have Cognizance; because they are θεόπνευστοι, *divinely inspired*, which no person, no Church, no Convention of men, can with any Colourable pretext affirm of their Dictates, Canons, Decretals, or Constitutions: And that amongst many other Reasons, because they were not indited in heat, or passion; were not Contrived to advance one party, or to depress, and crush another, but were the Result of infinite wisdom, impartially respecting Truth, faithfully acquainting us with the mind, and will of God, without Adhering to any faction.

§. 2. That there can be no concern of any Church, or Officer in the Church, or member of the Church, but the Scripture speaks fully to it. As. 1. If a Church will approve her self to be *the pillar of Truth*, and expose to all her Members the Doctrine of the Gospel, the Scripture is, ὠφέλιμος πρὸς διδασκαλίαν, *profitable for Instruction*, or 2. has she occasion to Convince the Cavilling world, and stop the *Mouths* of *gainsayers*: The Scripture

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is ἀφέλιμος πρὸς ἔλεγχον. It Lays down *the Truth*, and thereby discovers errour, heresy, false doctrine, all Corruption in worship, and manner; It gives us what is *straight*, and thereby enables us to judge what is *Crooked*; or 3. Are there *any Tares sprung up* in the field of the Church, *sowen by the Enemy whilst Men Slept*, (and men will sleep) it is profitable also πρὸς ἐπανόρθωσιν, for the *Correction*, rectifying, and redintegration of whatever is warped, and declined from its Original. It supplies, and fills up the wide chasmes of defectives, and pares of all excrescences, and prunes of superfluities, or. 4. Must Christians be trained up under Gospel discipline, and order, that they may grow up in knowledge, in every grace, in mutual Love, it's useful πρὸς παιδείαν. No pædagogy, no Constitution, no discipline to be compared with it.

§. 3. That it is a Rule which must direct *All the builders* in Gods house in whatsoever Quality, under whatsoever character they appear; It's *profitable* for the *Man of God*. And indeed it only becomes *The Man of sin*, he that is the "Ανομος, or *Lawless person*, who has *a curbe* for every mans Conscience, but will not endure *a snaffle* upon his own to despise this Rule, and cry up another.

§. 4. The *Absolute perfection*, *and completness of this Rule* is also Asserted: *It's able to make the Man of God perfect*, *throughly furnisht to all good works*.

Notwithstanding this Perfection of the Scripture *as a Rule*: it is always supposed, that every one in his private, or more publick capacity be Able to *use*, and *Apply the Rule*. As the square, or Rule of the *Architect*, however exact in it self, yet presupposes him to have *eyes to see*, and *brains to Apply* it to his work; so the Scripture *as a Law* teaches Duty, and whatever of well-pleasing obedience we can perform to God, yet supposes us at least to be *Rational Creatures*, that can apply *that Law* to our own particular Actions. Whence these two things must necessarily follow. 1. That it was not only *Needless*, but *Impossible*, that the Scripture should enumerate, or determine upon the *particular Natural Circumstances*, of *general time*, *place*, *person*, *when*, *where*, *who* should worship God, every day, hour, and minute to the End of the world: for so the whole world would not have afforded sufficient stowage for Rubricks, *nor have been able to contain the volumns that must have been written*: for as the End, and use of a Rule is not to each the Artificer *when* he shall begin to work, but *how* he may do it like a Workman, whenever he begins; so neither was the Scripture design'd for *a clock* to tell us at *what hour* of the day we should commence the publick service of God, but that when ever we begin, or end, we manage all *according to this Rule*. 2. That when the Scripture has prescribed us all *the parts of worship*, instituted *the Administrators* of worship, given Rules how to *separate them to that Office*, and laid down general rules for the Regulating those Natural circumstances, which could not particularly be determin'd, as that they be done to *Edification*, *decently and in order*; And has withal commanded

us to attend to this Rule, and no other, it has then Discharged *the Office of a Rule*, and as *a Rule is Compleat and perfect*.

(2) Besides our Retrospect to our Rule, we must also look forward to *the End, and Design of all Religion*, and when that is once well fixt, we shall have Another great Advantage to judge what worship is *Better*, and what *is worse*; Now the great End of all Religion, and specially of Religious worship is *the glorifying of God, the pleasing of God*; And therefore whatever shall pretend to that Glorious Title, and Dignity of being *an Act of Religion, a part of Religion*, and yet has no real Tendency to the Advancement of his Glory, (which it can never have without a due regard to the Rule) ought to be Expunged out of the Catalogue of Lawful Acts, or parts of worship; And is so much the more abominable both to God, and Man: To *God*; because it offers him a Sacrifice not subservient to his Praise; and to *Man*; because it deludes him with a pretence of recommending his person, and service to God, and yet leaves and exposes both to Gods abhorrence.

From what hath been said, I might plead my self Competently qualified to gratify the Importunity of the *Enquirer*; and answer the Question, whether *A Better frame of things might not possibly have been found out?* If whatsoever *Agrees* with the Rule is *good*, then what is *discrepant* from the Rule is *Evil*; If what makes *a nearer approach* to the Rule is *better*, then what *departs further* of, is *worse*; but I look upon these kind of Questions as a *vapouring party* sent out to draw the unwary, within the Clutches of an Ambuscado.

Whatever Constitution shall impeach the only true Rule of *shortneß and deficiency*, is less good then that which implies *no such shortneß or deficiency*; But there are some Constitutions on the world, which impeach the only true Rule of shortness and deficiency, and Therefore they are less good then those which impeach not the Rule of such Deficiency, whatever Constitutions are made, supposed useful for decency, which are not Comprehended under the Rule, do Impeach that Rule of Deficiency; but there are some Constitutions made, supposed useful for decency, which are not comprehended under the Rule; and therefore there are some Constitutions which impeach the Rule of Deficiency. Whatever is Comprehended under a Rule, must at least be necessary *by way of Disjunction*; but there are some Constitutions in the World which are *not Necessary*, so much as *by way of Disjunction*; therefore they are not Comprehended under the Rule. There is not the *smallest or most minute Circumstance* which can cleave to any Religious Act, or wherewith we can Lawfully cloath Gods Worship, but it is by the Command of Christ made necessary at least *disjunctively*. But there are some Constitutions which are not made necessary *disjunctively*, and therefore they are such as wherewith we cannot Lawfully cloath Religion, or the Worship of God. We are Commanded by Christ to *Baptise*; now though it was not possible that it should be deter-

termined *how often*, in *what places*, at *what hours*, with *what Number of persons* the Ordinance should be administred in Every Age and Country from its first institution, to the End of the World; yet its' determin'd that they to whom of right it belongs to baptise at one hour or other, in one place or other, and so time and place are Determined *by way of disjunction*: but there are some things which 'tis not necessary to do, *the one or the other* to the Compleat fulfilling, and decent performance of the precept, and therefore are not commanded by way of disjunction.

It would therefore be no such difficult labour to find out a better way, for all the difficulty would lye in reforming Abuses, removing Corruptions, and reducing Christs Ordinances to their primitive institutions: „ Hoc enim adversus omnes hæreses valet: Id esse verum quodcunque Prius: id esse adulterum, „ quodcunque posterius. *This is* (saith Tertullian) *the great Mantle of all heresies*, (and I will add, against all Corruptions) *that whatsoever was first is True, whatsoever was introduced afterwards, is a Corruption.*

But though perhaps, the Dissenters may possibly *find out what is Better*, yet they will never *Agree amongst themselves*; which is an old Politick put-off for Reformation: The Levity of which Objection is easily discovered for.

§. 1. We are all Agreed, that the Scriptures are *the only Rule of worship*, and they that are thus far Agreed are in a fair way towards *perfect unity* so far as 'tis attainable in this *state of Imperfection*: for though they may miss in the *Application*, through the weakness of their judgment; yet being secure that their *Rule is good*, and sincerely endeavouring to come up to it, and reform by it, they cannot be *fatally wide*, nor *mortally differ*: All that are *Agreed in their rule*, have this singular Advantage, that they can debate their differences amicably upon common principles, whereas they who *differ in the Rule* must needs differ in all the Rest; they that divide in *the Center*, must needs divide infinitely in their motions towards *the Circumference*, and they that differ in *the foundation*, must necessarily disagree in *the superstructures*.

§. 2. All that Agree in the Rule have *prepared minds* immediately to Cassier, whatever they shall once discover to be repugnant to that Rule: and will easily part with any mistake as it shall be made out to them; whereas they who set up false Rules of worship, and yet suppose them to be true, are as tenacious of whatever they find suitable to those erroneous Measures they have taken, as if they were the most sacred Concerns of Religion.

§. 3. They that own the same perfect, and infallible Rule, are thereby kept within such bounds of sound judgment, warrantable obedience, and Christian Moderation, that they can maintain Communion with each other, and both of them with the same *one God*, *one Lord*, *one Spirit*, in the Ordinances of the Gospel, though still differing in lesser matters: whereas they

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who set up new Rules of worship; exclude all others from their Communion, but such as submit to their *Novel Canons*, and Constitutions, imposed as the Terms of that Communion.

§. 4. They who embrace the word of God for their Rule, do keep alive the fire of Evangelical Love towards each other, notwithstanding the little diversities that are found amongst them; when they who advance their own Pleasures for the Rule, and Reason of obedience, are engaged in a Zealous persecution of all those who comply not with their Concepts, as is Evident in the Church of *Rome* at this day. It will be delightful no doubt to the Reader, to be Refresht with the *Enquirers* Rhetorick, who has been tyred with my duller discourse, and therefore I shall gratify him with his Reasonings.

It's *Reasonable* (says he) *we should be able to Agree upon, and produce a better Model, least instead of having a New Church, we have no Church at All*: yes, highly reasonable it is; *For* — (Let him that reads now endeavour to understand the strength of his four Arguments.) 1. *Such a Society as a Church can never be conserved without some Rites or other.* 2. *Neither any Society can continue, nor any publick Worship be performed, if all Ceremonies, and Circumstances, such as of time, place, persons, and the like, be left indefinite, and undetermined.* 3. *If there must be some determination of Circumstantials, it must be made either by God or man*; 4. If there must be some *Determination of Circumstances, or no Society, and God hath made no such Determination, what remains but that Men must? And then who fitter then our Governours?* And what these four Learned arguments contribute to the proving his assertion: That *Dissenters will never be able to find or agree upon a better Constitution*, I hope the Learned do perceive, for my own part such is my dulness. I cannot discern it: but let us Examine the Assertions as they lye in order.

[1] *It can never be thought by wise men, that such a Society as a Church can be Conserved without some Rites, or other*: [Rites, Ceremonies, Circumstances] are the Terms under which all the collusion Lurks: when he would flatter us into the humour to yeeld him a point, or two, then he speaks of nothing but *Circumstances*: when he would Amuse us with an obscure Term, then we hear of Nothing but *Rites*, and when he would kill us with a Mortal Conclusion, then out comes *Ceremonies*; but I answer:

§. 1. If *a Church cannot be conserved without some Rites*, then let the Imposed Terms of Communion be only of such Rites, without which *the Church cannot be conserved*, and we will contend no longer: If *any Rite* be so necessary to the being of a Church, that its Constitution must moulder away into dust, without it, we are content *that Rule* be made a Term of Communion:

§. 2. From hence then it will evidently appear that *mystical Ceremonies*, such as the *cross in Baptism, the Surplice*, ought not to be imposed as *the Terms of Communion*, because that *without such*

Such Rites of humane appointment, the Society of the Church may be conserved: I would fain know how the Church was *Conserved* in the Early, purer times of Christ, and his Apostles? They had not recourse to the *Ladies Closet open'd*, They understood nothing of the Modern curious Arts of *Conserving, candying*, and *preserving* Religion in Ceremonious *Syrrups*; and yet Religion kept sweet, and Good. They were some of his Holiness *Ladies of Honour* that first taught the World, out of a miraculous good will, and tender pitty to the Church, to *conserve* the two Sacraments of Christs institution, in *five more* of their own invention: because our Saviour had not prescribed enow to *Conserve the Church from Dissolution.*

§. 3. This seems to be a little too high preferment for humane Ceremonies, to make them *Conserving Causes* of the Church; At Rome they have proved *Defiling* Causes; in other places *Causes of Offence, Scandal, and Division*; they have *burdened* some, and *debauched* others, and *Raised persecution* against the rest: but they were never yet *Conservators* of the Churches purity, or peace; surely the parts of a Church are very sorrily put together, that has no other Cement, to unite them; and the frame and contexture there of exceeding brittle, that must dissolve upon the Removeal of a Ceremony.

§. 4. If by *Rites*, he understands nothing more then *meer Natural Circumstances* we grant that *no Church can be Conserved, no publick worship Celebrated* without the Observation, and Determination of *some such Rites*, that is in plain English no Church can worship God, except they agree to worship him *somewhere*, which is a Discovery well worthy of all this *Periphrasis*, and tedious *Circumlocution*, for who ever once thought in a Dream, that *A Body* could exist, and yet possess no place? or *an Action* be spun out by Men for an hour, or so, and yet not be *measur'd with time*? It must be some strange *vertigo* therefore that whirles the brains of these *Non-conformists*, that they will endure the utmost extremities, rather then renounce, and abjure such Cross non-sense, That God *must be* Worship't, and yet *may* be worship't *no where*: That a Sermon may be Extended to an *hours length*, and yet preach't in an *Indivisible Instant*: some or other must needs be out of their wits.

God (says he) *cannot be Worship't* by men *without all Circumstance*: By *men*? No nor by Angels! They have their *Ubi*, and *definitive place*; nor can they traverse the Poles in *a moment*; though they are so swift winged, as to dispatch it in *imperceptible Time*: So that this Argument will enforce the *Cherubims* to Conform to the Ceremonies, as well as *the poor Dissenters*. And well did he say, *It can never be thought by wise men*. — For he must be a Natural fool, or Idiot that thinks otherwise; And to make sure work, he will confound us quite with two most unmerciful Reasons. 1. Reason, *Erasmus* (says he) *as we petty Corpora-*

poration, or Company can. Nay I will ſtrengthen his Reaſon for once; Not only *no petty*, but none of the *great Trading Corporation, theſe Nurſeries of Schiſm, and neſts of non-Conformity* can be *conſerved* with *ſome Rites or others*: They have their *pageants*, (and goodly things they are, and Contribute wonderfully to their *Conſervation*,) but yet to deal freely, and plainly with our *Enquirer*; Though I allow his *Concluſion*, I cannot ſwallow his *Medium*. Arguments taken from my *Lord Majors ſhow* will never enforce Religious mythical Ceremonies. Bodies politick may be beholden to ſome *little Artifices* to conciliate admiration, if not Adoration from the *thickskin'd vulgar*, who ſee no further then the ſcarlet, and furr; But Religion needs none of theſe tricks, and deviſes of wit, to ſet her off. She is never more Glorious then when ſhe ſhines with her own *Naked, and Native Luſtre*: ſhe Adornes her Attire, but borrows no Ornament from her cloathing. She is none of theſe Empty *Quelque choſes*, who wanting intrinſick worth to recommend him to ſociety, thinks to ſtrike the Spectators with Reverence to his Pantaleons, and waving Plume: ſuch was the anſwer of *Luther* to *Vergerius*: That *it was the great fault, and folly of Rome to eſtabliſh the Church with a Government taken from Humane Reaſon, as if it were ſome temporal* ſtate.

2 Reaſon: Becauſe *men have bodies, and are bound to glorify God with their bodies as well as ſouls.* I am ſometimes ready to ſay in paſſion of an Age cheated with ſuch ſilly Arguments, *Qui decipi vult, decipiatur*: He that has a mind to be gulled, much good may it do him! That *we have bodies*, will only infer that all *Natural Circumſtances*, which neceſſarily *adhære to a body*, muſt be determined; but not at all, that we worſhip God by *Myſtical Ceremonies*, for that I may worſhip God acceptably without them, I can demonſtrate. Becauſe Chriſt did ſo: but that we may worſhip him acceptably with, or by the Ceremonies he has not yet offer'd us demonſtration. I never yet underſtood that the Diſſenters did worſhip God *in ſtatu ſeparato*, which if they could 'twould notably diſappoint *the Informers*, who could never ſwear their preſence at a Conventicle, becauſe they *never ſaw the Complexions of their ſouls.*

(2.) *It's as plain* (ſays he) *that neither any ſociety can Continue, nor any publick worſhip be performed, if all Ceremonies, and Circumſtances, ſuch as of time, place, perſons, and the like, be left indefinite, and undetermined.* All the ſtile in this propoſition lies in this, that he has wiſely ſoiſted in, *Ceremonies* amongſt *Circumſtances*: And to prevent all fraud, and Legerdemain, Let him uſe a little of that *Candor*, he borrow'd of his Reader not longe ſince; and tell us uprightly, whether He takes *Ceremonies and Circumſtances* for Terms of the ſame import? And if ſo, then whether he will degrade the word *Ceremony*, from its uſual Repute, to ſignify no more then *a Natural Circumſtance*: or Advance the Term *Circumſtance* to ſignify *Myſtical Ceremonies*: for if by *Circumſtances*, he underſtands *Ceremony*, in the common, and

and received Acceptation of the word, the Proposition is false: *That no society can be Conserved without some Circumstances; that no publick worship can be performed without some Circumstances*; that is without *unscriptural Symbolical Ceremonies*: And all this discourse will not reach the hundreth part of a proof of it: for its the easiest thing in the World to worship God without the *sign of the Cross*: or any *such like* circumstances, and there are thousands that have made the experiment: but if by *Ceremonies* he intend no more then bare *natural Circumstances*: The whole proposition is granted him, but then the misery is, it will do him no service, contribute nothing to his design.

The Reader may beat a loss perhaps as well as my self about the determinate sense of his words, and it's convenient we should be so at present, matters are not yet Ripe for discovery; I know his *cause* requires, his *Conclusion* needs Ceremonies, but his *premises* are modest, his *instances* only pretend to *Circumstances, such* (says he) *as of Time, place, person, and the like*: Which must be a little Examined.

(1) *Time*. That Time is a *natural Circumstance*, inseparably *adhering* to, or if you will, say *accompanying*, every Action sacred or civil, wants not the Authority of the seven wise men of Greece to Confirm it: that is *sometime in General, yet time in special*, that is *Religious time*, is no *such Circumstance*: No Action can be done without time to do it in, yet Actions may be done without *such time*, as shall render them either *morally better, or worse*: that is, such as add any *moral goodness, or evil* to the actions: If then he take *Time*, in the *former sense*, 'tis then very true, that no publick worship can be performed *without the determination of time*: It must be determined by some or other when the publick worship shall begin, as whether at *eight, nine, or ten of the clock*, otherwise it cannot be attended on by the whole Church. But if *Time* be taken in *the latter sense*, for such time as shall *render the worship more Acceptable to God*, because perform'd in such time, there's no necessity *man* should determine it, both because all the skill he has, can add *no such Respect* to Time, and because God has already determin'd for so much of that time, as his wisdome has judged necessary.

There are three Considerations of Time which may deserve our thoughts in this Case.

1. The *Quamdiu*. Or the *quota pars temporis*: how long the Action shall continue.

2. The *Quoties*, how often the Action shall recurr, as whether in an *Annual, diurnal, horary*, or *septenary Revolution*. (let that word please, or displease.)

3. The *Quando*, or *Epocha*, from what point of time the Action shall start, or bear date. When therefore he says, *no worship can be performed, unless this Circumstance of time* be *defined, and determined*: I would know to, which of these considerations of Time, his Assertion does Relate? for it's Certain that in every of these Respects, Time either is, or must be determined, by God or man.

1. Then

§. 1. Then for the *Quamdiu* of *Solemn time*, we affirm that God has ſanctified to his ſervice and commanded us to *keep holy one day in ſeven*: but how much of this time ſhall be Allotted to *private, and perſonal devotions*, how much beſtowed upon *domeſtick, and family duties*, how much aſſigned to *publick ſervice*, is not preciſely determin'd by God; yet thus far he has determin'd by the Light of Nature, and common Reaſon, that if A day muſt be Expended in, and divided between *theſe three kinds of Devotions*, that each ought to have ſuch a proportion aſſigned to it, as the weight, and dignity of the work requires; ſtill apportioning the whole time amongſt them, excepting ſo much as he has reſerved for the incident duties of neceſſity, and Charity, which *Exception* he has put in to *all affirmative precepts*.

§. 2. For the *Quoties*, how often this ſolemn ſacred time ſhall return: we affirm that God has ſufficiently determin'd it, nor can we be affrighted out of our ſenſes, with the Empty clamours of *Judaiſm*, *Sabbatarianiſm*, or whatever other noyſes, irreligion, and prophaneſs can muſter up: There is no neceſſity therefore that Any Church ſhould determine upon any other Revolution of ſacred time, and if ſhe ſhall make the Adventure ſhe will apparently ſin, for ſhe muſt either make the Revolution *narrower*, and ſo ſin againſt the *Churches Liberty*, by preſcribing *too frequent* a Return; or *wider*, and ſo ſin againſt the *Churches Edification* by *too Seldom* a Return of the publick worſhip.

§. 3. For the *Quando*: when this ſolemn, and ſacred time ſhall commence; He that has determined, when *the day of Labour* has determined thereby, when *the day of Reſt* ſhall begin, As in the one he Commands us, to do *All our work*; ſo on the other He commands us, to do *All his*; which is therefore the *More ours*: Becauſe it is *wholy his*: But for the *Quando* of *the publick worſhip*, As God has not determin'd it, ſo it's neceſſary, ſome or other muſt: But ſtill what's all this to Ceremonies?

Now the Great Queſtion here will be, *who ought to make this determination?* And in my weak judgment, They who are upon the place, who know beſt *the particular circumſtances*, out of which *the Expediency* of ſuch Determination muſt Ariſe; they who know the conveniences, and inconveniences of determining this way or the other, are the moſt competent Judges in this Caſe: Suppoſe the Queſtion were, whether we ought to meet together for publick worſhip at nine, or ten of the clock? what could *a convocation* ſay to this? or what *general Law* could be made for all the particular Churches in a thouſand miles Circuit? If we look upon the *Country Villages*, they have *the oxe, and aſſe to water, and feed*, their cattle to attend in the field, for whom God has *made proviſion*, that they ſhall reſt, and not ſerve upon his day: If you look on *the petty, or greater Corporations*, they have no calves in the ſtall, no flocks in the field, their ſhops are ſhut in, their affaires reduced to a Narrower

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Compaſs, and therefore may commence ſooner then the Country Villages.

Suppoſe nevertheleſs, that ſome will needs Determine this affaire; That all Churches under whatſoever Circumſtances, expedient, or inexpedient, right, or wrong, with all their particular members, ſhall upon paſn of excommuniation aſſemble for publick worſhip, ſtrictly at *nine of the clock*, upon pretence of uniformity, and that all may unite and aſſociate their devotions, as it were at once beleaguering heaven, and wreſtling for a bleſſing; I cannot but think what diſtractions, confuſions it would raiſe in mens hearts, and conſciences; what ſquabbles, what quarrels it would create in the viceinage; For my neighbours Dyal, I obſerve, goes a full quarter of an hour before mine, and he ſets his clock by his own Dyal; and then riſes in the Morning by his own clock: If for no other Reaſon, yet becauſe he can hear his *clock* ſtrike, better then his *Dyal*, ſo that here's an endleſs controverſy like to ariſe between us, whether his clock, or mine ſhall deſerve *Excommunication*; Now to part or prevent this fray, there is a certain *infallible Officer* erected, called a *Sexton*, or *Sacriſtan*, one that will take his oath, his Clock goes true, whatever Sir, Sun ſays to the contrary, and he ſhall decide this Brawle, when he *chimes all-in*; ſo that in the upſhot, this great Queſtion, the Church troubles her ſelf with, muſt be reſolved into this *Momentous Canon*, That all Churches ſhall begin their publick Worſhip, when my *Goſſe whatchicallum* pleaſes. And thus much for the Circumſtance of Time.

(2) *Place.* This is indeed *a Circumſtance*, and conſidered *in general*, an inſeparable Circumſtance of *a Body*; ſo that it haunts us wherever we go like *a familiar*, and purſues us more earneſtly then *our ſhadow*; and therefore as to publick worſhip there muſt be ſome Determination of *Common place*, where a Church ſhall aſſemble for the ordinary worſhip of God. But if place be conſider'd *as Religious*, that is, as *ſuch a place*, as renders the worſhip *more acceptable to God*, we ſay, It's not in the power of Man to Determine of any ſuch Religious, or holy place, becauſe he can make none ſo.

And yet though he cannot determine the place *as Religious*, he may determine it as *convenient*, and perhaps *expedient*; And beſides, ſince the Magiſtrate is concern'd to keep an eye upon *all aſſemblies* whatſoever, that *the publick peace* committed directly to his charge, may be preſerved, and not violated by *ſeditious Meetings*, he may therefore command all the Churches under his juriſdiction to convene in ſuch open places where his Officers may come, and make inſpection into their demeanours, and behaviours, and the Churches are bound in order to this end, to ſubmit to his determinations, in Conſcience to God: for if the Place (or time) be *inconvenient*, yet that's only ſome prejudice to *the worſhippers*,

but *no pollution of the worship it self*; and the primitive Christians no doubt would chearfully, and thankfully have struggled with many incommodities, provided the freedom of worship at *any time or place* might be secured to them.

But if *more open* places will certainly expose them to ruine, they may Lawfully keep their foot out of the snare; for as Master *Hales* says well. *In times of Manifest corruption, wherein Religious assembling is dangerous: Private Meetings however besides publick order, are not only Lawful, but of necessity and duty, else how shall we excuse the Meetings of our selves in Q. Maries days?*

(3) For *Persons*: they also will fall under the same distinction. The Circumstance of the Person *in general*, as whether his Name be *N.* or *M.* is of little, or no consideration in the case; but for persons *in special*, as marked out for publick service, that is very material. And we affirm that Christ has already determined upon that point; The Qualification, calling, setting apart of such a one to his Office, with the Nature and end of his Office, together with his whole employment, work and duty towards the Church, are all determined, and none has power that I know of to dispense with those determinations. The Materials out of which a Church is to be formed, the ends of that embodying, by what bonds and ligaments they are united, the duty of Pastors, Teachers, and all Church Governours prescribed, by what Laws they shall govern, and how far the members are to give obedience, are all so far limited, that the Church has nothing to do but to submit to the Commands of her Lord, and if she be a true Spouse of Christ, she will submit exercising all prudence in applying general Rules to particular persons, and emergent cases.

(4) But his last word [And the like] will do him more service, and us more mischief then all the rest: for how to bring in *the Cross, Surplice, and other Mystical, Symbolical Ceremonies*, under *time, place, or person*, was very difficult; but this *Et cætera* [And the like] will do the feat; and at this back-dore thousands of Ceremonies, such as Holy Oyl, Spittle, Cream, Salt, Ephata's, *and the like*, may be introduced. But what now if *these Ceremonies* be not *The Like*, but *other-like*? why, then is all this pompous discourse blown up! A *moral Circumstance* is not *the like* with *a Natural*; That which adds neither *moral good, nor evil* to the worship, is not *the like*, with one that does so: That which is Commanded *with the duty*, is not *the like* with that which is *not so*. That without which the Worship *cannot* be performed, is not *the like*, with that which is *not requisite* to its performance. I conclude therefore, that *And the like* conceals some mysterious point from us, which 'tis not as yet convenient to discover to us; And keeping a wary Eye upon it, let us proceed to his third assertion.

[3] *If there must* (says he) *be some determination in Circumstantials, it must be made either by God, or man*: very true! If it must

be

be done, it muſt be done, there's no remedy. And for all *Religious Circumſtances* ſuch as may render the Worſhip either more uſeful, and edifying to men, or more pleaſing, and acceptable to God, they are already determined by the Lord of worſhip; and *Kirks, or Keyſar*, have nothing to do herein, at leaſt he has not proved that they have: for *thoſe other* Circumſtances, which are neceſſary to reduce the Ordinances of Chriſt *into Act and Exerciſe*, it's no very great matter who determines them, if they have but *power*, and *abuſe not their power*.

God has determined *in general* that we worſhip him, and has preſcribed all the ordinances by which we ought to worſhip him, and therefore we muſt come to a determination *when, and where* we will worſhip him: He has determined more ſpecially that the Churches worſhip him ſolemnly upon *his own day*, and the Churches muſt come to a fixed reſolution, when they will *begin* that worſhip: he has determin'd we ſhall *Baptiſe with water*, and therefore if we will execute that Command, we muſt uſe *ſome water or other*: but he has not determined that we ſhall *make any Figure*, either of *Triangle, ſquare, croſs, or Circle*, and therefore none can determine *in particular* where God has not determined *in the general*: He has determin'd that I muſt worſhip him *decently*, and therefore that I worſhip him in *ſome garments*, for Nakedneſs is contrary to *Natural Decency*; but he has not Commanded me *in general*, that I worſhip him in *holy garments*, and therefore none can determine *holy garments* in worſhip. Again, he has determined *the Officers* of the Church, and therefore ſuch and ſuch perſons, duely qualified according to his rules, muſt be choſen to execute the Offices; but he has not empowred the Church to Erect *new Officers*, and *new Offices*, and therefore ſuch an attempt is beyond the Churches commiſſion.

But now (ſays he) *God has made no ſuch determination*. Ay! but we ſay, and muſt ſay it a hundred times over, if the contrary be a hundred times aſſerted without proof, That God has already determined all Religious Circumſtances, which we call Ceremonies, all Ordinances of worſhip to exhibite, ſeal, convey any Spiritual mercy, or ſupernatural grace: and for thoſe natural Circumſtances which attend all Actions whether ſacred or civil, they muſt be agreed on before ſuch actions can be performed in a Community; And if this be the game he flies at, believe it he ſtoops to a very mean Quarrie.

The Reader is often vext with an odd word, which frequently occurs in *The Enquirer* called *Determination*. A Term both of *a Miſchievous, and a Lubricous Nature*, and it would be good ſervice to the peace, to bind it to it's good behaviour. To *Determine*, ſignifyes to ſettle or fix to one ſide, that which has hung in the æquipoiſe of Neutrality; when thoſe things which have played in a pendulous poſture between good or evil, uſe or non-uſe, come to be ſettled one way or other, they are *Determined*: Now the Queſtion is, whether any have power to

Determine *things in themselves indifferent*, that they shall be no longer indifferent *in their use*; To which all that I shall need say as to the present occasion, will be comprehended in these following particulars.

1. That where *two Circumstances of the same kind* offer themselves, if *the one or the other* be necessary to the discharge of some necessary duty, there's a power lodged somewhere, to determine whether of these two shall carry it; otherwise a *Necessary duty* must be *eternally suspended*, it's ends *frustrated*, and it self hang *in Potentiâ*, for ever, without ever being brought *in to Act*.

2. Where two, or more Circumstances offer themselves, none of which are necessary to the discharge of the duty, there's no power lodged in any to determine for any of them: for if *one unnecessary Circumstance* (which is *every way unnecessary*) may be determined by power from God, ten thousand such may be determined, and then our misery will be this, that though our burden be *intolerable*, yet we can have no cause to complain, but with *Issachar* must *patiently couch down* under it:

3. If Circumstances besides their *Natural Adhesion to an Act*, have any *Morality* ascribed to them, as if they render'd an act of Religion either *better or worse*, none is vested with *power to impose* them, nor any with *a Liberty to use them*. Because we ought not to make Gods Worship *worse*; and we are sure we *cannot make it better* then he has made it.

4. In those cases where God has vested any with a power of determination, it ought to be made clear that they who pretend to the power, have a commission to show for it; because liberty is a thing so precious that none ought to be deprived of it without good Reason: and this is the Task which our *Enquirer* will in the last place undertake for us

[4] *If Circumstantials* (says he) *must be determined or no Society*; *And God hath made no such determination, what remains but that man must? And then who fitter then our Governours, who best understand the Civil Policy, and what will suit therewith, and with the Customs, and inclinations of the people under their Charge.* In which notable Thesis two things call for examination, his assertion, and the Reason of it.

§. 1. His assertion: That *none is fitter to Determine Circumstantials then our Governours.* Where. 1. We must suppose that he understands *Civil Governours*, or else his *Reason* will bear no proportion to his *assertion*. 2. Let it be observed, that it's *no great*, or however no *killing matter* to the Non-conformists, or *their Cause*, who it is that Determines *meer Circumstantials*, for they are things of a higher Nature then these, about which the Controversy is, if some mens Interest would let them see it. 3. Seeing that the Determination of such meer Circumstances, *in some cases* is matter of *meer trouble*; *in some cases impossible* for the Civil Magistrate to determine them, I am confident they will not be dis-

displeased, if *Reason* discharg's them of so useless a burden.

As time, *in General*, is a Circumstance *concreated* with every *Humane Action*, so with *every command, and obligation* to duty, there is a *Concreated Command*, and *obligation* to determine of *some time*, wherein to *discharge that duty*. And hence it must unavoidably follow, That *to whomsoever* God has *immediately and directly given a Command to worship his Great and holy Name*, to them he has *immediately and directly*, at the same time, *ipso facto*, given a *Concurrent Command*, to *determine of all those circumstances* which are necessary to the executing of that Command. Thus if God has obliged every Individual person *to Pray*, he has *therewith* commanded him to *single out, and set apart some time* wherein to put up his supplications to God. Thus also, If God has *directly, and immediately* Commanded *every particular Church* to worship him jointly and publickly, he has also by virtue of that Command enjoyn'd them to agree upon a time to celebrate and solemnize that worship; Now this Command is so straightly bound upon the Consciences of all Churches, that though *none should determine for them*, nay though *all should Determine against* them, yet are they under it's authority, and must come to an issue about it, unless they will draw the guilt of the neglect of worshipping God upon their souls, with that wrath which is due to so great contempt of the Divine Law.

Now that every particular Church has a direct Command to worship God, and by consequence to determine of those circumstances which are necessary to the worship, is evident from this one Consideration, that *they all did so in obedience to the authority of Christ in his word*, whilst all *Civil Governours* were so far from *Determining the Circumstances*, that they *determined against the substance*.

The Gracious God has now made some of the Kings of the earth *Nursing-fathers to his Churches*, but yet we cannot believe, that the Churches power is less under her *Fathers*; then it was under those *Bloody Persecutors*: And if this power be lodged in the Civil Magistrate, and he have no rule to Direct him about the *when, and where*, what a miserable case would the Churches be in, if he should *never determine* these Circumstances, without which the Churches can *never worship* God: For thus proceeds his Argument. *No publick worship can be Performed without the Determination of some Circumstances* (as time for one, and place for another) But *God has determined none of these Circumstances*, therefore unless some other Determination be made, besides what God has made, no publick worship can be performed: Again, If *some other determination* must be made besides what *God has made, then* it must be made *by man*, but some other determination must be made besides what God hath made, therefore it must be made by man: Again, If a determination of circumstantials must be made *by Man*, then by the *Civil Ma-*

strate, But a determination must be made by man, therefore by the Civil Magistrate, from whence it will be easy to Argue: That if a Magistrate *will not determine* of those circumstances which are necessary to the publick Worship of God, there can be no publick worship; but when the Magistrate is an enemy to the Christian Religion, he will never determine of those circumstances which are necessary to the publick Worship of God, Therefore when the Magistrate proves an enemy to the Christian Religion, there can be no publick Worship of God: Nay *there ought to be none*: And it will hold against *the Protestants worship* where the Magistrate is *a severe Romanist*.

Now though it be true that the Command to Worship God publickly, be directly and immediately given to the Church, yet seeing every Church is *in the Commonwealth* as a part of it; and that every soul therein ought to be *subject to the higher powers*, and because the peace of a Nation is not a little concern'd in the prudent or disorderly management of publick assemblies, and seeing that the chief Magistrate is the Vicegerent, and great Minister of God to preserve the peace, that this lower world may not be too like a Hell, therefore has he a very great concern herein. *Ne quid Respublica detrimenti capiat*: And therefore if any Church shall chuse such *unseasonable times, or places*, as may give just occasion of jealousy that some mischief is hatching against the Government, he may prohibit them that *suspected place, time, or other jealous Circumstance*, and command them to elect some more convenient, and in offensive ones, That so *Religion* may be *cleared*, the *Magistrates heart eased*, the *peace secured*: only it seems reasonable to assert. 1. That the Magistrates power herein is but *Indirect and in order to peace*, and that the Christian Church had such power to determine all such circumstances before ever *Magistrates owned Christianity*. 2. That the Magistrates power seems not to extend to determine *between Contradictories but disparates*, that is, that he has no power to determine whether the Church shall *Worship*, *or not worship*: but that of *two times*, *or places*, *or other Natural Circumstances*, the *one* carrying some appearance of suspicion, the *other* none, he has therein a just power. 3. That where *no private person* might determine of such a Circumstance in his personal devotions, nor *a particular Church* hath any power to determine for themselves in their publick worship, there it seems the Magistrates power reaches not, because he might then make that a persons, or a Churches duty *by his Authority*, which *without his Command* had been their sin:

1 If then the Question be; who is fittest to determine those Circumstances which are Necessarily to be determined? the Answer is ready; They are fittest to determine *to whom the Command is Directly given*, and who must answer it to God, if for want of such Determination the Worship of God be laid aside, and neglected.

2, If the Question be put, who is fittest to determine of those Cir-

Circumstances in publick assemblies, which *relate to the publick peace*? The answer is clear: He to whom *the Conservation of the publick peace is Committed*, is accountable to God, if through his default it be violated.

3. If the Question were once more moved: what if the Magistrate should forbid a Church to Worship God at all? The answer is obvious, though the Duty be hard. He that has made it a duty to suffer quietly and patiently, has promised suffering grace, that they may suffer comfortably and courageously, taking up the cross willingly, bearing it comely, and following their Master faithfully.

4. But if the Question were put (as it ought to be, if it answers the *Enquirers* designs) who is fittest to determine of Ceremonies, which are not any way necessary to the discharge of the duty, such *new Ordinances* whereof God has not spoken one word, either *in general*, *or particular*? It will be hard to say who is the *fittest*, because *none is fit*! That is though many may be meet to determine of meer Natural Circumstances, and they the fittest to whom the Command to perform the duty is directly given, yet none is empowred to make *new worship* or *new parts of worship*, or to *add any thing* to the Commands of Christ.

§. 2. The Reason of his assertion follows. *They best understand the Civil Policy, and what will suit with it, and with the Customs, and inclinations of the people.*

This Divinity, that *Religion is to be modelled according to Civil Policy, the Customs, and inclinations of the people*, was certainly borrowed from *Apollo's Oracle*: that the Idol was therein true to his own interest, who used this *one principle* to root out all *True Religion*, wherever he bore sway.

Where *Haman* had learn't it I know not, but I am sure he had it at his fingers ends. 3. Esth. 8. *And Haman said unto the King. There is a people dispers'd and scatter'd abroad among the people in all the Provinces of thy Kingdom, and their Laws are Divers from all peoples, neither keep they the Kings Laws: Therefore it's not for the Kings profit to suffer them.*

Thus *Aristotle* in his Adulatory discourse to *Alexander* the *Great*, tells him that when *Apollo* was asked concerning the Worship of the Gods, he answered: Ὅτι τὰ νομιζόμενα πᾶσιν, τοῖς ἀνθρώποις προστάττει, καὶ τὰ πάτρια θύειν παρὰ ἑκάστοις. *That all the Oracles enjoyned men to Sacrifice, according to their own Country Customs.* Thus *Socrates* in *Xenophon*: Οἶσθ' γὰρ ὅτι ὁ ἐν Δελφοῖς θεὸς, ὅταν τις αὐτὸν ἐπερωτᾷ, Πῶς ἂν τοῖς θεοῖς χαρίζοιτο; ἀποκρίνεται, Νόμῳ πόλεως. *You see that the Delphian God, when any one asked him, How he might worship the Gods with Acceptation? answered, According to the Law of the City, or Commonwealth.* And Seneca professes, that in matters of Religion he considered not: *Quæ dis Grata, sed quæ Legibus justa*: Not so much *what was acceptable to the Gods, as what was warranted by the Laws of the Land.* But I hardly forbear smiling, when I read how the *Delphic Devil* was put to

his Trumps, about this Question: *Tully* tells us. Lib. 2. de Legibus. „Cum Athenienses Apollinem Pythium Consulerent, „quas potissimum Religiones tenerent; oraculum editum est, „eas quæ essent in More Majorum. *When the Athenians consulted Apollo, what forms of Religion chiefly they should embrace: The Grave Oracle answers, Those which had the Authority of their Ancestors Custom, and usage.* But here the *Embassadors* cross't him, and told his worship; „Morem Majorum sæpe esse „mutatum: *The Custom of their Ancestors had been often changed.* Alas they had reform'd, and reform'd again, and again, over and over, and could arrive at no settlement for want of *a Rule*, and therefore they demand: „Quem morem potissimùm sequerentur è variis? *Which of all those various Customs and Rites they should observe?* The Devil, who is never wholy at a loss for an Answer, gave them this: *Optimum! pray pick out the best you can find*: though *never a barrel had better herrings.* But to his Reason I say.

1. That he has now wholy *given away the Churches Authority*, which has made such a Noise in these last Ages, and all her power in determining things indifferent is surrender'd upon discretion. It's very suspicious that they have no assurance of the Consistency of their Notions, when they know not where to fix *this power of instituting, and imposing* Ceremonies: one Age talk't of nothing, but πάντα ἰυχημόνως, καὶ κατὰ τάξιν, but we hear no more of that but privately among friends: Another time *the Church* was brought in to vouch for them, but it will not do there; At last *Thomas Erastus* taught us to throw them upon *the Civil Magistrate*; *Grotius* has made use of the Notion, and for his sake we cry it up at home, but Another Chapter will offer us further occasion to discourse that matter.

2. That *the Magistrate understands the Civil Policy* best, is *very true*, but *no warrant* for *the imposing of Ceremonies*: for what is the Civil Government prejudiced, If I worship God according to his own Rules? or what *propriety of the subject* destroyed; what *prærogative of the Prince* impaired; or what *privilege of Parliament* invaded by *a Ministers baptising according to Christs naked institution, without the Cross*?

3. It's one of the greatest disservices *the Enquirer* can do to Religion, to make it truckle to *the Humours, and customs of the people*: p. 59. he tells us, *the vulgar are altogether for extreams*; and blames *Calvin for Complying with the Humour of the vulgar.* And yet now all oth' sudden the Magistrate must determine, because *he knows best what suits with the inclinations of the people*: though indeed one main end of the Christian Religion was to oppose those radicated Customs, and Idle Humours *received by Tradition from their Fathers.*

I am now obliged to look a little backwards, and consider his attempts to prove, that *God has not Determined Circumstances*: wherein if he had pleased to have understood others, all this

had

had been ſpared, unleſs perhaps he underſtood not himſelf.

A long ſtory he tells us of *Temple and Synagogue worſhip*. How punctual God was in his directions about *the former*, how more laxe in thoſe about *the latter*. And his Reaſon is: *Becauſe there was nothing Symbolical, but Natural Religion, which the Nations they had of God, and the Common ſenſe of Mankind was ſufficient to guide them in.* Which diſcourſe of his well improved, would give a notable ſhake to the ground-work of this whole Chapter: for all the Religion of Chriſtians is either *inſtituted*, or *Natural*, If it be *inſtituted*, it depends wholy on the will of God, to make it known to us, and to make it our duty: and therefore ſo much of it as is of this Nature, will plead the priviledge of the Temple, Man has nothing to do with it. If it be *Natural*, then *the Notions we have of God, and Common ſenſe are ſufficient to guide every particular Church in it*, nor ſhall they need any Dictatorſhip to ſupply the defects. As *Chriſt* has cleared up to us *the Moral Law*; ſo he has preſcribed us *a Ceremonial Law*: And as it would be a bold affront to the Divine Majeſty to pretend to add *one Commandment to the former*, ſo is it no leſs an uſurpation upon the Legiſlative power of Chriſt to ſuperadd *one inſtitution* to the latter. He that may make three or four Humane Sacraments, may with equal pretext make eleven or twelve Humane Moral Commandments.

There is a Command. 12. Deut. 32. *What thing ſoever I command you, obſerve to do it, thou ſhalt not add thereto, nor diminiſh from it.* And under whatever diſpenſation we are, we are under the reſtraint of this prohibition: This is granted by all in the general, only the Queſtion is what Conſtitution or Inſtitution will amount to *an Addition to Gods Commandment?* To which I anſwer. 1. *Negatively*: It can be no Addition to a Commandment, to determine of ſuch Natural Circumſtances, which are neceſſary to the executing the particular duties commanded either by a Ceremonial, or Moral precept. God has commanded me *to Relieve the widow, and the Fatherleſs*, with part of that which his bounty has graciouſly given me: he has not determined *on what day*, or *what hour of the day*, or in what particular place, or to what perſons by Name I ſhall extend my charity, and therefore every perſon to whom the Command is given (and it is given to every man to whom God has given ability) muſt determine theſe, and other Circumſtances, without which 'tis impoſſible that Law ſhould enure, and take effect. Thus has he commanded ſome to *Baptiſe with water*, but he has not told us, whether that water ſhall be brought from *a River or Spring*; and therefore he that is commanded to baptiſe, is *thereby Commanded* to determine, and he is neceſſitated to it, if he will diſcharge his Duty: nor can ſuch determinations be Interpreted any Addition *to the Law*, becauſe they are *included in the Law*, unleſs we will ſuppoſe the Law-

Nugatory, and to be vacated by every forward Caviller. 2. *Affirmatively*: whoever shall institute any Ceremony, which is not necessarily required to the performance of any of Gods Commands, such as is not comprehended in any general Law of Christ, must necessarily be adjudged to have added *another Law or institution* to the Institutions and Laws of Christ.

To illustrate this, I shall use a very familiar Instance; I will suppose a Standing *General Law* in a Nation, That *no person (except the Legislatour) shall add to the Laws of the Land.* I will suppose also a *particular Law* promulgated by the Legislatour: That *every subject shall sweep his dore once a week with a Beesom*: Now to sweep my dore with a Beesom of *Birch*, *or Broom*, cannot possibly be *any Addition* to that Law, because 'tis *necessarily required* to the putting of the Law in practise, that I do it with the *one*, *or the other*, and therefore they are both comprehended *virtually* in the Law by way of *distinction*, that is either with *this*, *or that*, *or some other*. Again, to sweep my dore on the third day of the week, and at the ninth hour of the day, can be no Addition to the Law, because I am commanded to do it, upon *some day in the week*, *and at some hour of the day*, and the Law not having defined the precise day and hour, supposes it indifferent to the Lawgiver, which I chuse, but *one or other I must chuse*, unless I will obstinately disobey the Law.

But now, If I will not only sweep my dore, but over-Officiously will needs make *a Cross* over it, this is an Addition to the Law, being neither Compehended under the Command of sweeping, nor necessarily required to the reducing the Law into Act.

Let us suppose yet further, that the *Mayor* of some of our *Inquirers Petty corporations*, with the Advise of his Brethren, shall put forth an Order or Edict, that Non-obstant the Law *De non Addendo*, every person within the limits of that Burrough shall be obliged *to Cross*, as well as sweep his dore, and that unless he will Cross it, he shall not sweep, and that every man shall subscribe to this Order and Edict, and whosoever shall contravene the same, shall be disfranchised; This must needs be interpreted an Addition to the Law with a witness; A most express and daring violation of it.

But now to mend the matter, we will suppose the *Mayor* with his Brethren shall solemnly declare, that though they do Command Crossing as well as sweeping, yet they do not here by intend, in any wise to make *any Addition to that or any other Law*; such an Explanatory declaration would be of little Credit among the more Considerate sort of men, as being contrary to the fact.

But Mr. *Mayor* will plead, that though he has added something for the greater solemnity, and decency of the Action, yet he pretends not to make a Law for the Nation, his is only an order of the Court for his own corporation, and therefore he ought not to be charg'd with Adding a Law, to the Systeme of the Laws; But his worship is hugely out, for the General prohibi-

tion,

tion, caution'd him not only against Adding *a Law to the Law*, but against *Adding any thing to the Law*:

The Reader has often observed our Distinction of *Natural* and *Moral Circumstances*. Now a *Natural Circumstance* is such a one, as arising out of, or adhæring to a *Natural Action*, adds no Goodness nor Evil to the Action: but a *moral Circumstance* is such, as always renders the Action either *better*, *or worse*: Thus Baptism is neither better nor worse, more, nor less pleasing to God, whether it be administred at *ten a clock*, *or eleven*; but *every Symbolical Ceremony* must either render the Ordinance to which it is added or with which it is used, more or less acceptable. Thus the sign of the Cross instituted to signify *a persons dedication to the Lord Christ as his faithful Soldier*, must either add to, or detract from the Moral Goodness of that Institution to which it is annex't, or with which it is used: for either it makes it *better*: As doing the same thing with Baptism. viz. dedicating a person to the service of Christ, seeing a double tye, or obligation to any duty seems stronger then a single one. or else it will render it *worse*, because it does that *superfluously*, which Christs own Ceremony had before done *sufficiently*; and endeavours to perform that *ineffectually*, which the institution of Christ had already *effectually performed*: And because it being a part of instituted worship, and yet wanting divine Institution; nor having any track, or footstep in the light of Nature. it seems to *Overdo*, what was *once well done*.

Now since it must either prejudice, or Meliorate the worship, it may be convenient to enquire, whether it may have a *propitious, and benign*; or *a Malignant influence* upon it? And Dissenters are enclined to think *the latter*: All the goodness of Instituted worship depends meerly upon the Authority of the Legislatour, either as he has instituted it, or empowred others to institute it; or promised to accept it from us, and bless it to us: Now (say these Dissenters) Christ has neither instituted this Dedicating Symbol, nor empowred others to institute it, nor promised to accept it at our hands, nor Entailed any blessing upon it, and therefore it must needs render the Worship less good, because it self, (as used) is evil: And whether Christ has *instituted* it, or *warranted others* to do it, or *annext any such promise* to it. they are willing to joyn issue with any of their Brethren who will soberly manage the Debate.

Some of them I have heard thus Argue: All *worship not-Commanded*, is forbidden;

But these Ceremonies are *worship not-Commanded*; therefore they are forbidden.

§. 1. The Major Proposition I thus prove, first from the Concession of the Learned Dr. H. *Hammond*, a great and strenuous Patron of Ceremonies, who in his *Treatise of Superstition, and will-worship* against Master D.C. freely owns it. That all *uncommanded worship is forbidden*. Secondly, I prove it by this Reason. They who may institute *New Worship*, may destroy the *old Worship*. For *Cujus*

est instituere, ejus est destituere: the same Authority that can *make a Law*, can *Repeal a Law*; But no man can destroy *the old worship*, therefore none can institute *new worship*. Lastly, I prove it from the Authority of God, who destroyed Nadab, and Abihu, 10. Lev. 1. and renders this Reason of it, because *they offer'd strange fire before the Lord, which he Commanded them not*: I know it is answered by Master *Hooker*, and others, That the strange fire was not only *not-Commanded*, but *forbidden*: To which I reply, suppose that to be true; yet God only insists upon this that it was *not-Commanded*: It is pleaded further, that God was strict, and punctual in his commands to *the Jewish Church*; but he has indulged us a greater Latitude under the Gospel: But the reply is easy: That our Liberty under the Gospel lies not in an exorbitant power to frame *New Ceremonies, or new worship*, but in our discharge from *the servitude of the old*: Not that *we may Create more*, but that he has loaded us *with fewer particulars of instituted worship*: It's then very evident: That *all worship not-Commanded is forbidden*.

§. 2. The *Minor* I thus prove: viz. That *Symbolical Ceremonies are worship not-Commanded*. That which is *a part of worship, is worship*, but the Ceremonies are *a part of worship and not Commanded*, therefore they are *worship not-Commanded*. None will scruple to grant the *Major*: The parts must needs partake of the Nature of *the whole*: The *Minor* I thus evince, from the *Enquirers* Confession in his *Introduction*: where he reckons it amongst the Glories of the first times of Reformation, That *the Liturgy, and publick Prayers were counted a principal part of Gods worship*. That which is made a part, of a principal part of Gods worship, and yet uncommanded, is a part of Worship not-Commanded, but such are the Ceremonies, therefore they are a part of Worship not-Commanded. The former proposition depends upon a known, and received Maxime: *Quod est pars partis est pars totius*: the second proposition is our *Enquirers* own assertion; *The Liturgy is a principal part of worship*, the Ceremonies are a part of the Liturgy, therefore the Ceremonies are a part of a principal part of Worship: And if the *Enquirer* stick at any thing here; I will make him this fair offer, Let him undertake to prove the Ceremonies *Commanded*: and I will undertake to prove them Worship.

There are only some excellencies in this Chapter, which like the *Sporades* lye dispersed up, and down his discourse, whose coherence not obliging them to any fixed Residency, I shall for a conclusion, in this place consider them.

(1) His first great assertion is. p. 147. *That Christ never went about the Composure of Laws, either of Civil, or Ecclesiastical Policy*. We shall not need to concern our selves about Christs *Civil Laws*, seeing he professes *his Kingdom was not of this world*. 'Twas not *a Worldly Kingdom*, administred according to *the Maximes of State*, and *Mysteries of Policy* which had obtained here below; That it should be *Spiritual*: The Laws and Constitutions,

ſtitutions, the Officers, and Miniſters thereof of Divine Original, managed for ſpiritual Ends, by ſpiritual means; the Rewards ſpiritual and eternal, the puniſhments inflicted upon the diſobedient all ſpiritual, ſo the Apoſtle. 2. Cor. 10. 4. *The Weapons of our warfare are not Carnal, but mighty through God.* v. 5. *And having in readineſs to Revenge all diſobedience*: It's true alſo, that when once we have tinctured our brains with falſe Notions of *Eccleſiaſtical Policy*, whereof we find no footſteps in Scripture, we ſhall be ready to affirm as much of thoſe Laws which he has preſcribed concerning the Adminiſtration of his ſpiritual Kingdom: but this we think clear. 1. That Chriſt has inſtituted as many Laws, as ſuch a Church as he eſtabliſhed ſhall need. And perhaps he was not concerned to write Decretals, Extravagants, Gloſſes, Canons, Bulls, to fit all the Governments that the wit of man ſhould afterwards excogitate. 2. He has by Himſelf, and his Apoſtles deſcribed *all the Officers* which he judged ſufficient to conduct his Diſciples in wayes of Holy obedience through the temptations of this world to eternal life. 3. He has alſo inſtituted *as many Ordinances and Sacraments* as may ſerve to guide and direct them as Chriſtians, and let any one Name one that is wanting to that end, if they be able. 4. From the Nature of thoſe Officers which he hath appointed, the ſpecies, Nature, Kind, of his Eccleſiaſtical Government is abundantly manifeſted. 5. He has given expreſs charge that *It be not ſo* with his Officers, as 'tis with *the Kings of the Gentiles who exerciſe Lordſhip over them*, 22. Luk. 25. 6. Nor has he Commiſſioned any Governours to make any Laws directly for his Church, as a Church, binding the Conſcience of his Diſciples. 7. The Sacraments which he has ordained, the expreſs Rules he has given for Paſtors or Biſhops, with all other Officers, are evidence ſufficient that he has made ſome Laws of Eccleſiaſtical nature: and that he has been defective therein, becomes not Chriſtians to Aſſert.

(2) *The Apoſtles* (ſays he, ibid.) *gave certain directions ſuited to the Conditions of the times and places, and people reſpectively; but never compoſed a ſtanding Ritual for all aftertimes: Which will be put beyond all diſpute by this one Obſervation, That ſeveral things inſtituted by the Apoſtles in the primitive Churches, and given in Command in their ſacred writings were intended to be obliging only ſo long as Circumſtances ſhould ſtand as then they did, and no longer.* Where we have two things that challenge Conſideration.

§ 1. His Doctrine. That *the Apoſtles gave Certain Directions ſuited to the Conditions of the times, places, and perſons reſpectively, but never compoſed a ſtanding Ritual*: To which I ſay. 1. If by *a ſtanding Ritual* he mean a Portuis, a Liturgy, a Maſs-book, a Ceremonious Rubric, The Rules of the Pye, or the like, it's very true, and that which the *Non-conformiſts* do gladly accept the Confeſſion of: but if by *a ſtanding Ritual* he underſtand fixed Laws, ſuited to the Condition of the Church in all Ages, under all the various diſpenſations of Gods providences, we deny it, and expect his proof.

§ 2.

§. 2. His evidence is this. *This one observation will put it beyond all dispute.* It's a happy observation, and deserves a Hecatombe for its invention, that will silence all dispute in this matter: but what is it? *That several things instituted by the Apostles* in the primitive *Churches, and given in Command in their sacred writings, their Epistles were intended, and so Construed only to be obliging so long as Circumstances should stand as they did, and no longer.* To which I answer. 1. That there were indeed *some temporary Ordinances*, such as were to expire with the Reason and occasion of their institution: but then there was also sufficient evidence that it was the will of God that they should expire, and cease: such was that Command of *Anointing with Oyl.* 5. Jam. 14. which was sealed, and attested by an extraordinary concurrence of Gods power; witnessed to by miraculous effects. But God having now Broken that seal, withdrawn the concurrence of his power, we need no other evidence that it was only proper for the first planting of Christianity and is now long ago out of date. 2. His one observation comes infinitely short of putting this question out of dispute with any wise man: for what if *several institutions* were *temporary*, will it follow that none were *perpetual*? what if some were suited *only to those times*, shall we thence conclude there were not enow suited *to all aftertimes*? There were *extraordinary Apostles*, are there therefore no *ordinary Pastors and Teachers*? Or must a Nation be at all this vast charge to maintain *Humane Creatures*? what if *some Rites* were momentany? Are there not *Sacraments*, in the right use where of Christ has promised to be with his Ministers *to the end of the world*? such wherein we are to *shew forth the Lords death till he come*? It's as easy to say all this of *Baptism and the Lords Supper*, that they were calculated only for the Meridian of those days, (and some are not ashamed to say it) as of any other order, or constitution of Christ by his Apostles, whose *temporary nature* is not expressed, or evidently implyed in the *temporary Reason*, upon which it was built. 3. The Epistles of the Apostle to the Corinthians *as a Church*, shews what ought to be the order and Government of every Church: The *occasion of writing* those Epistles might be, and was *peculiar to them*, and so was *the occasion* of writing all the rest, but *the Design* is *Common to All*. Nor ought any one to dare to distinguish betwixt *temporary*, *and perpetual institutions*, where the Scripture has not furnisht us with sufficient ground for such Distinction,

4. As there never was a more pernicious and destructive design managed by the Prince of darkness, then *the Rejecting the Scriptures as the only Rule of Faith, worship, and all Religious obedience*, so the *Mediums* where by 'tis carried on, is the very same with that of this *Enquirer*: There are an absurd Generation amongst us in this Nation, to whom if you Quote the Apostles Authority in his Epistle to the Corinthians. For the standing and perpetual use of *the Lords Supper*, will give you just such another Answer. *What do you think we dwell at Corinth? what to the Epistle to the Co-*

Corinthians to us? whe are *English men!* and so it seems unconcern'd.

Thus the Papists justify their half Communion: *Serenus Cressy.* Chap. 12. p. 137. in Answer to Dr. *Peirce*, his *Primitive Rule of Reformation*: we acknowledg (says he) *Our Saviour instituted this mystery in both Kinds. That the Apostles received it in both Kinds, That St. Paul speaks as well of Drinking, &c. But the General Tradition of the Church, (at least from his Beginning) will not permit us to yeeld, that the Receiving in Both Kinds was esteem'd as necessary to the essence of the Communion; or Integrity of the participation of Christs Body and Blood*:

But let us see what service his select Instances will do him to prove his Doctrine. *Of this Nature* (says the *Enquirer*) *were the Feasts of Love, the Holy Kiss, the order of Deaconesses.* To which I return. 1. The *Feasts of Love*, and the *Holy Kiss* were not as all *Institutions of the Apostles*. All that the Apostle determined about them was, that supposing in their Civil Congresses, and converses they salute each other, they should be sure *to avoid all levity, wantonness, all Appearance of evil*, for Religion teaches us not only to worship God, but *to Regulate our Civil Actions in subordination to the great ends of Holiness*, the adorning of the Gospel, and thereby the glorifying of our God, and Saviour, I say the same concerning the *Feasts of Love*. The Apostle made it no Ordinance, either temporary, or perpetual, but finding that such a civil Custom had obtained amongst them, introduced, we charitably believe, for the maintaining of Amity amongst them, and seeing it sadly to degenerate amongst the *Corinthians*, He cautions them against gluttony, drunkenness, all excess, and ryot, to which such Feasts, through the power of corruption in some, and the Remainders of corruption in the best, were obnoxious: which is evident from. 1 Cor. 11. 21. *One is hungry, another is drunken.* The Apostle Paul. 1 *Tim.* 2. 8. Commands *that Men pray every where Lifting up Holy hands*: Can any rational Creature Imagine, that he has thereby made it a duty, as oft as we pray to *elevate our hands*? That was none of his design to that Age, or the present: But under *a Ceremonial phrase* he wraps up an *Evangelical duty*. As if he had said, Be sure you cleanse *your hearts*; And if you do *lift up your hands*, let them be no umbrage for unholy souls.

2. Concerning *Deaconesses*, I can find no such Order, or Constitution of the Apostles. It's true they used in their Travels, and other occasions the services, and assistances of Holy women, who chearfully administred to their Necessities, and are thence called διακονοι, and said διακονοῦν. But how childish is it to conclude *an order or Institution* from so slippery a thing as *an Etymology*? The Angels are called λειτουργικὰ πνεύματα: *ministring Spirits*. 1. Heb. 14. will any from hence infer, that they read *the Liturgy*? Magistrates are stiled λειτουργοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ, and διάκονοι θεοῦ, 13. Rom. 4. 6. And yet it's no part of their Office to Read Divine service. St. James

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was by some Ecclesiastical Writers, dignified with the Title of Λειτουργὸς. Whence some conclude he was *a Liturgy-maker*. And thus our willing *Enquirer*, to serve a turn, must needs have those *Good women* that did Διακονεῖν, by all means to have been ordained to the Office of *She-Deacons*.

These words λειτουργεῖν, and διακονεῖν, as *Bellarmine* notes, signify no more in their general import, then *Quolibet publico munere fungi*: to perform any publick service for the Common benefit, whether sacred, or Civil: But when they are applyed to any *Religious work or service*, then by accident they have *a sacred signification* stampt upon them: And therefore the same Cardinal from those words 13. Act. 2. λειτουργούντων δὲ αὐτῶν τῷ κυρίῳ. *As they ministred to the Lord*: Has found out *a Masse*, compleatly rigged out for service: Others will discover from thence *a Liturgy*, though the duller sort of people can espy no more then *the worship of God*, which may very well consist without either: 1. In a word: The Duty's of saluting with an *Holy* Kiss: The ordering of all our Ἀγάπαι, or Feasts of love to Gods Glory; The ministring in our respective places to *the necessities of the Saints*, are as much in force as ever, unless Holiness be grown out of fashion, so that this *one Observation* will hardly put the Question *beyond all Dispute*: let him try a second.

(3) If it be true, as he says, that *the Christian Religion was to throw down all Inclosures, to unite the world under one Head, and make of all Nations one people, and therefore must be left with freedom as to Circumstantials*: Then it seems they design some depopulating inclosures, and to disunite the world again, who set up such distinguishing Ceremonies, as divide those of the same Nation, the same Religion, both at home and abroad.

(4) His confidence, that *It is evident, that it is unreasonable to expect that every Ceremony made use of by Christians should be found prescribed in the Scripture or proved thence*, does not at all move me; I am accustomed to encounter feeble proofs, seconded with gigantick confidences: I think it's reasonable that they who pretend to Imitate Christ, should follow his example in this also. 5. John. 30. *I can of my self do nothing, as I hear, I judge*: And that they who act under his Authority, should produce his Commission, or at least not expect so ready a Compliance with those Ceremonies, which they confess not to be proved from Scripture. In the mean time from *Circumstances in the premises*, to *Ceremonies in the conclusion*; from *some* Circumstances *to all*, from *Natural* to *Moral*, is a leap too great for any one to take that valued the breaking of his Neck, more then the Breaking of his Fast.

His fine story of *Pacuvius* is lamentably impertinent, for the Question *there* was, who should be the *Senator*: allowing the *Senate*: approving the *Order*, but quarrelling the *persons*: but Dissenters greatest Dispute is about *the office*, whether *jure divino* or no? They Question not whether *Cross*, or *Cream* suit best with Baptism? but whether any such Ceremonies ought to be used with

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it, or Added to it: They do not ſet op two or three new devices as Candidates for preferment, but plead that *all of that Kind* be removed. And if all the ſcuffle were which of them ſhould be uſed, which repudiated, the Non-conformiſts would not bet a penny on either of their Heads.

CHAP. V.

A thorough Examination of that Principle, whereon the *Enquirer* lays too *great ſtreſs*: That *God lays very little ſtreſs upon Circumſtantials in Religion.*

THe Hiſtorian obſerves of the *Ligurians*, a kind of *Banditti*, that skulk't here, and there, and always plaid *leaſt in ſight*, that *major erat aliquanto labor, Invenire, quam vincere.* They were an enemy *harder to be found out, then being once diſcovered, to be rowted*: upon which account this *Enquirer* may paſs for an Antagoniſt more *troubleſome* then *formidable*; and yet therefore *formidable*, becauſe *troubleſome*.

He Profeſſes himſelf as ready to lay down his life for *the preſervation of unity, as in teſtimony againſt flat Idolatry*: and next to, if not before them, he ſeems willing to dye a thouſand deaths, rather then ever *ſtate a Queſtion*.

God lays very little ſtreſs upon Circumſtantials: That may be true! And *God lays very great ſtreſs upon Circumſtantials*; That may be as true alſo! But when He lays *very little*, and when *very great* ſtreſs upon them, let others blow the coal for him, he will ſave his breath for better purpoſes.

The Queſtion would receive a very quick diſpatch, if we his poor *Plebeian Readers* were worthy to know what he intends by *Circumſtantials*; but ſeeing we are none of his great *Cronies*, and *Confidents* that may be admitted into his Cabinet-Conſels, we muſt be content with the *Andabatarian Fencers*, to Cuff it out blindfolds.

If he were under any Obligation to uſe ſuch *Mediums, and Inſtances*, as were proportionable to his concluſion, we might conjecture that by *Circumſtantials* he means ſome *Divine inſtitutions*: But ſeeing he has impoſed upon himſelf no ſuch ſevere diſcipline, I know none has that power over him, as to compel him to their Laws of Diſcourſe and Diſputation.

God lays very little ſtreſs upon Circumſtantials · *undetermined by himſelf*; but there Impoſers *lay the main ſtreſs*; And God lays very great ſtreſs upon Circumſtantials *by himſelf once determined*, but there, (I thank you), our *Enquirer* lays *very little*. And there is Reaſon enough, and to ſpare, why God ſhould lay great

great weight upon the ſmalleſt matters which he has commanded, but not half enough why Men ſhould lay ſuch a ſtreſs upon their Pleaſures, as to venture the Churches Peace upon them, unleſs it could be made out, that they had *Authority* from God to do it *warrantably*, an *Infallible Spirit*, to do it *exactly*, and *infinite Charity*, to guide that *Authority*, without which, to entruſt any Creature with ſuch a Power over Circumſtantials, were but to put a ſword into it's hand, that would kill ſome, wound many, and at laſt Deſtroy himſelf.

It is indeed a Noble Deſign which he purſues, viz. *To Beget in Men better Notions of God, and better Meaſures of Religion*; for hetherto Men have fancied God to be very rigid, and ſevere about *ſmall ſins*; but our *Enquirer* will eaſe the minds of Men of their ſcrupuloſities, and diſcharge conſcience from any Regard of the Authority of God in his poſitive Laws, and inſtitutions. A work infinitely grateful, and eternally obliging this prophane, and Atheiſtical Generation, who had rather keep ten of their own, then one of Gods Ceremonies.

And with ſuch Sophiſtry did the Archenemy prevail upon the leſs wary Minds of our firſt Parents. *Te ſhall not ſurely dye!* The Command is meerly Poſitive, *no eternal Reaſon of evil* in the thing; And *God Lays little, very little ſtreſs upon* Circumſtantials, *ſecure but the main*. Let there be *no Schiſm* between you, and never troubie your ſelves about theſe inſtitutions which are but *ſecundæ intentionis*; And he is ſeconded notably by the *Enquirer*, p. 161. *All Ceremonial Appendages*, (and ſuch were the Trees of Life, and Knowledge, in Paradiſe: Circumciſion, and the Paſſeover, under the Law; Baptiſm, and the Lords Supper, under the Goſpel) *are perfectly ſubordinate, and ought to yeeld to the deſigns of Peace, Charity, and edification*. And yet theſe poor deluded ones found to their coſt, that He who repreſented God As *a Captious Deity* (as the *Enquirer* with great ſeriouſneſs words it) proved himſelf *A Captious Devil*, and that it had been more their Intereſt to have Credited Gods moſt *ſevere threatnings*, then Satans moſt *ſugred promiſes*.

But if it be true, That God lays ſo very little ſtreſs upon his own, we need not Queſtion but Men will lay at leaſt as little upon their inſtitutions; If God be ſo indifferent, and remiſs, we hope we ſhall not find them rigorous; for ſeeing *Magiſtrates* are called *Gods*, ſuch as bear ſome conſiderable part of his Image, and borrow of his Authority, they will no doubt repreſent that God to us, truly as he is, *A God of Mercy, grace and pitty*; and not *watch Advantages againſt their Creatures*; but *ſo long as the Main of ſubjection is provided for, and the ſubſtance of their Inſtitutions obſerved, Alterations may be made in leſſer matters without their offence*.

That *the Servant* is ſometimes more ſevere then *the Maſter*, we are taught from *Gehazie's* ſin, and may we never learn it from his Leproſy. 2. Kin: 5. 20. *My Maſter hath ſpared Naaman this Syrian, but as the Lord Liveth I will run after him, and take*

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somewhat of him. And there was *another Servant* in the parable, who laid a great ſtreſs upon *a few Deniers*, when his Lord laid leſs upon *many Talents*; And would have pluckt out his fellow ſervants throat for *a ſorry Circumſtance*, when he had the face to beg Indulgence *in the ſubſtance.* And we are ſufficiently leſſon'd that it's better to addreſs *the Lord himſelf*, then the *Steward*, ever ſince the *Syrophenician* met with ſuch churliſh treatment from the Diſciples, and ſo gracious a Reception from our *B. Saviour*: ſuch are ſome of our Church men, who Lye baſting at and worrying of the Magiſtrate night and day, to exact the rigour of Conformity and the penal Statutes, as if all Religion were utterly loſt, unleſs *their Circumſtantials* were preſerved, Sacred and inviolable, whatever become of *Gods Circumſtantials.*

The Title of this Chapter Modeſtly aſſerts only thus much, that *God lays very little ſtreſs upon Circumſtantials*: But the continued Tenor of his diſcourſe labours to make it out, that he lays very little upon *ſome of his own precepts*, the True and clear ſtating therefore of *Circumſtantials* in the Queſtion, would be above half way towards its Anſwer.

Under the Moſaical Law God commanded that they ſhould offer to him the תמיד juge Sacrificium, or the Daily Burnt-offering: and in this caſe *the Colour of the Beaſt*, (provided it was otherwiſe rightly qualified) was *a meer Circumſtance.* Such as God laid no ſtreſs upon, and that Man had proved himſelf an Ardetious, ſuperſtitious Buſy-body that ſhould curiouſly adhære to any one Colour: but for *the Heighfer*, whoſe aſhes were to make *the water of ſeparation*, there the colour was no Circumſtance, but made by Gods Command *a ſubſtantial part* of the ſervice: To be *Red*, was as much as to be a *Heighfer*; for when circumſtances have once paſs't the Royal Aſſent, and are ſtampt with a Divine ſeal, they become ſubſtantials in inſtituted Worſhip.

The Queſtion then ought to have been, whether God have any regard to his own poſitive Laws; or whether he be ſo indifferent about his own inſtitutions, that he lays little ſtreſs upon our obedience to them? But this had been too broad Engliſh, a little too uncivil for any that would carry fair correſpondence with the Scriptures: and therefore let it be mollified, and ſtand as it does: Whether *God lay very little ſtreſs upon Circumſtantials in Religion?*

In deciding this Queſtion, he had done very ingenuouſly, and fairly to have told us, from whence we are to take *the meaſures of that ſtreſs, and weight*, which God lays upon theſe things; which becauſe it was not for his Intereſt, yet may be much for the Readers, I ſhall endeavour to clear up theſe two things, firſt, from whence we *ought not*; and ſecondly, from whence *we ought* to fetch theſe meaſures.

[1] From whence we ought not to take the meaſures of the ſtreſs which God lays on them?

(1) Then we ought not to judge that God has *little regard* to

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any of his Commands, because *the Matter* of them abstracted *from his Authority, is little*; for we must not conceive that Christ sets little by *Baptism*, because *the Element* is plain *fair water*; or little by that *other Sacrament*, because the Materials thereof are common Bread, and Wine: nor to set them of, must we varnish them with pompous Pageantry, as if any thing were necessary to Buoy up their Repute, or beget an awful Reverence to his Institutions, besides his Authority. For 1. Though the things *in themselves* be small, yet *his Authority* is great. As God appears great in creating little things, his power conspicuous in employing little instruments to Atchieve great effects, so is his Authority very glorious in enjoyning small observances: 2. Though the Things be small, yet God can bless them to great purposes. 2. King. 5. 11. Naaman was in a great Huff, that the Prophet should prescribe so plain, and mean a way for his Recovery: he expected some Majestick procedure in the Cure, that the Prophet should *come out, and stand, and call on the Name of the Lord, and strike his hand over the place.* This had been something like! but to send him away ingloriously, with all that train, and bid him *Go wash in Jordan seven times*, was not to be endured by a Person of his ranck, and quality. *Are not Abana, and Pharpar, the Rivers of Damascus better then the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? And he went away in a Rage!* But we are to judge that to be best, which best reaches the End; *Healing Jordan*, then *ineffectual Pharpar*. 3. If the things be small, then the grace, and mercy conveyed by them, may be had at cheaper rates; And shall it be objected to Gods Ordinances, as their *Reproach*, which is their real *Glory? Baptismal water* may be had a thousand times cheaper, then the Popes *Holy water*, shall that be it's crime, when 'tis a thousand times more useful?

(2) Nor are we to judge that God lays little stress upon his institutes, because he does not immediately avenge the contempt and neglect of them upon the Violaters. And yet such is the unworthiness of Reprieved sinners, that they have formed one of their strongest Argumeuts for the Continuance of Corruptions in Gods worship, because he breaks not out upon them with present Destructions. 8. Eccles. 11. *Because sentence against an evil work is not speedily executed, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil*: whereas, 1. Such an Argument would equally conclude that God lays *very little stress* upon Murder, Idolatry, Sacriledg, nay *Schism* it self. 2. God will find a time soon enough to reckon with all those who bolster up themselves in these presumptions, and take an unworthy occasion to be therefore *Bad*, because God is so *Good*: All the threatnings that are upon Record, will certainly find out, and lay hold on the Despisers of his sacred institutions; And who to Accommodate their Doctrines to the Genius of the age, and humour the People with a Religion agreable to their Customs, must remember. 5. Math. 19. *whosoever shall break one of the least*

least of Christs Commandements, and teach men so, shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven. 3. God has not left himself without a witness that he is a *Jealous God*, in the matters of instituted worship: for though *Nadab, and Abihu* might plead that it was a small matter, a meer trifle what fire they used, so long as they kept close to *the substance of the Command*, yet God let them know, that he that offers *strange fire to the Lord*, may be consumed with *strange fire from the Lord*: And under the state of the Gospel, he has given such evidence of his displeasure herein, as may justly Alarm us out of our security. 1 Cor. 11. 30. *For this cause many are weak, and sick among you, and many sleep.*

(3) We are not to conceive that God lays *very little stress upon his Institutions*, because we see a prophane, and contemptuous generation of men *lay little weight on them*, except it be a Load of Reproach, and contumely: for this were to measure God by the world; as those prophane wretches did. 50. Ps. 21. *These things hast thou done, and I kept silence, and thou thoughtest, that I was altogether such a one as thy self.*

As we must not think that God appretiates, whatever men set a high value upon; so neither are we to judge that he disesteems any thing because it's grown out of fashion, and thereby exposed to contempt by the Atheistical wits of Mercenary writers. Our Saviour has told us; 16. Luke. 15. That what is *highly esteemed amongst Men, is Abomination in the sight of God.* And on the other side, what is of high account in the sight of God, may be depretiated by men.

If any of Christs institutions seem necessary to be broken; it will be first necessary to decry them as poor, low, inconsiderable Circumstantials, and then to fill the peoples heads with a Noice, and din. That Christ lays little stress on them, and in order hereto to call them the Circumstantials, the Accidentals, the minutes, the Punctilio's, and if need be, the Petty-Johns of Religion, that Conscience may not kicke at the contemning of them.

(4) Nor may we conclude that God lays little stress on his positive Laws, because he is ready upon unfeigned repentance to pardon the violation of them, for thus we might conclude also, that he laid *little stress* upon Murder, and Adultery, in that soon as David had said: *I have sinned against the Lord*: the Prophet delivers him a sealed pardon. *The Lord hath also put away thy sin, thou shalt not Dye.* 2. Sam. 12. 13.

(5) Nor yet ought we to form such conclusions, that God lays *little stress* upon his positive precepts, because he lays a *greater stress* upon *moral precepts* in themselves. As it would be an injury to conclude that any Church lays little weight upon the observation of *the Lords day*, because when one of its own instituted festivals, is coincident with that Day, *the ordinary* service thereof gives place to *the proper service* of that festival; when all that can possibly by the wit of man be inferred thence is but this,

this, that the Church may have a *Leſs reſpect* for the one, then the other: ſo would it be injurious to conclude, That God has *very little reſpect* to his own inſtitutions, becauſe he may ſuſpend their exerciſe pro *hic*, & *nunc*, rather then the duties imperated by a *Moral precept*: *Mint*, *Aniſe*, *and Cumine*, are inconſiderable things, compared with *the weightier matters of the Law, judgment, Mercy and Faith*. and yet our Saviour tells them, 23. Math. 23. *Theſe ought ye to have done, and not to have left the other undone.*

(6) As abſurd would it be to conclude, that God lays *little ſtreſs upon poſitives*, becauſe he diſreſpects *the performance of a duty in Hypocriſy*, for at this rate we may conclude that he lays little upon *preaching his word*. 50 Pſ. 16. *What haſt thou to do to declare my ſtatutes? or that thou ſhouldſt take my Covenant in thy Mouth? ſeeing thou hateſt inſtruction?* And the Conſequence is as Natural, that God Regards not prayer, becauſe he hears not the petition of him *that regards Iniquity in his heart*, 66. Pſ. 18. And *that the prayer of him that turns away his ear from hearing the Law, is an Abomination*, 28. Prov. 9.

(7) Nor may we gather that God makes little account of a poſitive precept, becauſe he ſometimes ſees Reaſon to indulge the omiſſion of its practiſe for a ſeaſon. What weight he laid upon Circumciſion is well known, that he threatned exciſion to the Malechild that was uncircumciſed at eight days old: And yet for fourty years in the wilderneſs the Act of circumciſing was ſuſpended: for the Acts of an Affirmative moral precept may be forborn for ſome time by our own prudence, and much more and longer by divine warrant, and yet the precept itſelf all the while ſtand firm in Gods regard, and in full force, power, ſtrength and virtue to us.

(8) We are not to conclude that God lays little ſtreſs upon an Inſtitution, becauſe he ſometimes commands an Act, which were it not for that *particular* and *ſpecial Command*, would by virtue of a *General Command*, be a moſt horrid impiety. Thus God laid a great ſtreſs upon *Killing*, much greater upon a fathers *Killing a child*; and yet greater upon *offering Humane Blood in ſacrifice*: And yet he commanded *Abraham* to ſacrifice his only Son, and by his Command made that moſt acceptable, and *venerable* ſervice, which otherwiſe had been moſt abominable to the Divine Majeſty.

To borrow, and not to pay again, is one of the Characters of a wicked perſon. 37. Pſ. 21. And yet God by his ſpecial Command authoriſed the Iſraelites to borrow of the Egyptians *Jewels of ſilver, and jewels of Gold:* with no intent I am perſwaded to repay them either *uſe or principal*.

God is the ſoveraign, and Abſolute Legiſlatour, who may ſuſpend, reſcind, alter his own Laws at pleaſure, and yet he has laid ſuch a ſtreſs upon the meaneſt of them that *no Man* may, nor any man, but *the Man of ſin*, dares preſume to diſpenſe with them, much leſs to diſpenſe againſt them.

9 Nor

(9) Nor are we to think that God lays little ſtreſs upon a Commandement, becauſe he little regards thoſe obſervances, which ſuperſtition, folly, Tradition, Cuſtom, have aſcribed to it, which were never comprehended in it: yet ſuch is the proceſs of our *Enquirers* Arguments: He inſtances in *ſome ſuperſtitious Additament* to the Command, which God *never required*, and thence concludes very learnedly that God lays *very little ſtreſs upon the Command*; let him therefore have leave to infer; God *laid little weight upon the obſervation of the Sabbath day*, becauſe the ſuperſtitious Jews were halter'd with an erroneous opinion, that they were bound tamely to ſit ſtill, and offer their *Naked throats* to their enemies *Naked ſwords* upon that day, which folly indeed God little regarded.

[2] Whence then ought we to take the meaſures of that ſtreſs God lays upon his inſtitutions?

(1) The true meaſure of that reſpect which God has for a Commandment, is to be taken by us, from *the Authority of God*: If the thing be ſmall, yet we are to regard his authority in it, for this God regards: And therefore he has back't of old both the poſitive, and the Moral precepts with this; *I am the Lord*; and the greateſt Inſtances of his Royal Prærogative are given us in thoſe Mandates, which have only his *ſoveranig pleaſure* to recommend them to our obſervance.

(2) The meaſure of that regard God has to an inſtitution, is to be taken from *the greatneſs of that glory which we give him in our obedience*. The great tryal of our ſincerity, and ſubjection to God lies in giving Deference to his will as the Rule, and Reaſon of our obedience: and then do we recognize his Abſolute power to diſpoſe of us when his will, whatever be the *Reaſon of it*, is *the Reaſon of our Compliance*. Thus *Abraham* gave God the greateſt teſtimony of inward Honour, when he prepared himſelf to ſacrifice his only Son, upon his only Command.

(3) We may take the meaſure alſo of the weight of a Command from its deſigned uſefulneſs to his great ends: for ſeeing, the ſmalleſt, and ſeemingly weakeſt of his injunctions are attended with his bleſſing upon the Holy, and due uſe thereof, we are thence to inſtruct our ſelves in the weight and worth of it.

The *Enquirer* tells us from *Maimonides*, that *there were ſome things in the Jewiſh Law, that were* primæ intentionis, *ſuch as God required for themſelves, as being intrinſically good: others that were* ſecundæ intentionis, *only required for the ſake of, and in order to the former*: Now his own judgment herein he acquaints us with, in theſe words. *The firſt kind that were eſſentially good, were abſolutely neceſſary: and could never be otherwiſe ſuch we call Moral duties: the latter kind were of ſo indifferent a Nature, as that they might not only not have been commanded, but alſo in ſome caſes having been Commanded, they may not be a duty*: but either he, or his Mr. *Maimonides* are quite out. For. 1. The *Acts* of Affirmative moral præcepts may in ſome caſes become no duties, the Command it ſelf abiding in it's full force; yet none will ſay that God

God lays *little ſtreſs* upon *the Acts* of affirmative Moral precepts: Thus the Acts of affirmative poſitive precepts may become no duty, yet none can ſay, that God lays little ſtreſs upon *the Acts of obedience* to a poſitive precept. 2. If this will prove that God lays little ſtreſs upon poſitives, becauſe *they are required only for the ſake of, and in order to the former*: Then it will evince that God lays little ſtreſs upon *all the means* which he has appointed for his great ends: for the *means*, *as they are*, *means* are only valuable for the ſake of, and in order to the end.

(4) What ſtreſs God lays upon his poſitive precepts, we may judge from thoſe ſeveritits which God has threatned againſt, and ſometimes executed upon the Violaters of them. It was for the violation of a Ceremonial Law: *the eating of the Tree of knowledge of good, and evil*, that God ejected Adam out of Paradiſe: It was for the neglect of a Ceremonial affirmative Command that the *Lord ſought to kill Moſes* 4. Ex. 24. And yet he had this to plead, that he was upon a journey, and about Gods Errand. It was matter of meer inſtitution, that was the Iſraelites ſecurity againſt the Deſtroying Angel: 12. Exod: viz. The ſprinkling the blood of the Paſchal Lamb upon the lintle, and poſts of the dore: That many do eſcape Gods vengeance at preſent, notwithſtanding their not obeying what God has inſtituted; and inſtituting what God has not commanded, will prove the admirableneſs of Gods forbearance, towards them who turn this grace into Laſciviouſneſs, and embolden themſelv's to ſin from his patience, but not in the leaſt, that he lays little ſtreſs upon his own precepts, whereof he will find a time to ſatisfy the Sons of men, from whence.

§. 1. It follows, That he argues himſelf a pittiful Sophiſter who concludes the leaſt Command may be broken, becauſe God turns not men to hell as oft as 'tis broken.

§. 2. He proves himſelf a notorious Hyprocite, that from either Gods grace in waiting or pardoning, ſhall encourage himſelf in ſinning; And flatter his ſoul that he may *curſe God and live*, when the Devil was more modeſt to ſuggeſt: *curſe God and dye*.

§. 3. Whoſoever ſhall openly preach this Doctrine, that *God lays little ſtreſs upon the Circumſtantials of Religion*, has open'd a floodgate to let in a Deluge of prophaneſs upon the world: for ſeeing no Command of God *is ſmall*, in reſpect of the Authority of the Law-giver, which is the formal Reaſon of our obedience to that Law, ſo no Command of God will *be Great*, but that Command paramount, *de non-ſeparandâ*; And then if every command that is *leſs then another*, may be ſaid to have *little ſtreſs* laid on it; ſeeing there is ſuch a Gradation in the weightineſs, this is in order to that, and that for another; there will but few, perhaps but one, of which it may not be ſaid, *God lays very little ſtreſs on them*.

§. 4. Although *the Acts of poſitive Commands* may give place

to *the Acts of Moral precepts*, when *both cannot consist*, yet when ever we can possibly perform both, we can *omit neither without sin*.

§. 5 To forbear the practise of an affirmative precept, when Circumstances do not conspire, is no violation of such a precept: Though no evil may at any time be done, yet some good may at some time be forborn.

§. 6. In all Laws of this sort there are several *Casus reservati*, cases kept in Gods own hands, which cases when they are put, the Controvention of that precept κατ' ῥητὸν, is no violation of it κατ' διάνοιαν: that is some things seem to enterfeire with *the Letter of the Law*, which are allowed in *the equitable construction* of it; Thus God Commanded the Jews to do *no servile work on the Sabbath*, and yet in case of assaults from Enemies they migt *Lawfully fight* without *violation of the Law*, or *Prophanation of the day*.

From what hath been said, the Reader may be furnisht with an Answer to those little attempts of the *Enquirer*, endeavouring to extort from us these two things; first; that God laid *very little stress* upon Circumstantials *in the Old Testament*. Secondly, That he lays less weight upon them under *the New*.

[1] That God laid very little stress upon Circumstantials under the O. T. he proves.

§. 1. By the instance of the Jews: *Who have now generally received that* Maxime, *Periculum vitæ dissolvit Sabbatum*, (*though they were a great while before they understood it and soundly smarted for their Ignorance.*) To which I shall need to say no more, then 1. This Instance was as ackwardly applied as can be imagined: He would prove that *things Commanded* may become *no duty*: and he instances in that which *never was Commanded*. He undertakes to prove that God lays very little stress upon a *positive Command*, and he brings an instance, that God lays very little stress upon *their Superstitions*. 2. I would seriously enquire of this *serious Enquirer*, whether God did really allow them the liberty of self preservation, and Defence upon that day? If he did; then it was their own *superstitious ignorance*, and foolish fancy, that debarre'd them the use of their liberty: If not; then whenever they defended themselv's *they sinned*; for *sin is the Transgression of a Law*. And then let the Question be new Modelled: whether God lay any stress upon sin? 3. If ever the Jews had such light into that Maxime, as to Interpret it thus: *The danger of life dissolves the Sabbath*, that is, *disannuls the Command*, their light was *gross darkness*: And they ran from *Superstition*, to *Prophaness*; the common Reel of those who to avoid *one extream*, run into *the opposite*. The true intent of the Maxime being no more then this: That self-defence on the Sabbath seem'd to be a violation of the *Holy Rest* of the day, but really was none: It being *Casus reservatus*, an Exception, not *from the Law*, but *in the Law*; thus our Saviour. 12. Math. 5. *Have you not read in the Law*,

that the Priests in the Temple prophane the Sabbath, and are Blameless? Now it cannot be, that *a real prophanation* of Gods Ordinance should be free from *all Blame*: but the meaning is, That the Priests by virtue of their Office were obliged to do *such Acts of bodily Labour* on that Day, which in *their general Nature* were *servile works*; And as they had *an appearance* of prophanation in them, so they had *really* been so, had not the *special Command*, of sacrificing on that day, secured them from the contracting of guilt by such bodily Labour: wherein there was no violation of any obligation, but only *Minor, & Debilior obligatio, cessit majori, & fortiori*: And for this he is loaden down with Authorities in our *Synops. Critic. in Loc.* Polluunt: non verè, sed impropriè, & quoad speciem: so Maldonate. „Violasse Dicuntur, quia ea fecerint, quæ nisi cultus Dei excusa„ret facere non licuisset, opera nempe genere suo servilia; cu„jusmodi sunt sacrificia mactare: so Menochius: And Grotius „fastens the Interpretation with this Reason: „Quia licet Pollu„ant κατὰ ῥητὸν, contra legis tamen διάνοιαν nihil admittunt.

§. 2. But his *fullest instance* is out of Master *Selden*: *That in case of sickness a Jew might not only eat such meats as were otherwise forbidden, but (say they) for the Recovery of his Health, or avoydance of any great danger, he might break any Precept, save only those three great ones against Idolatry, Murder, and Incest.* The answer to which is very obvious. 1. For *the eating of meats for the recovery of health, which* otherwise *were forbidden.* That word [otherwise] supposes them *Lawful in this case*, though not *in other cases.*

And is it not a learned proof, that God lays little stress upon *the violation of a Law*, because he lays *little* upon that which is *none*? An *exception in the Law* implies no *violation of the Law.* 2. That they might *break any other precept after except one of those three great ones*, Master *Selden* says not only he says, *the Jews lay so*: who were very favourable Casuists sometimes for their own ease, and convenience: This was indeed a *prophane Gloss* of the *Looser Rabbines*, but no ways warranted by *the Law-giver*: It seems they might *swear soundly*, to recover their health, for that might open their pipes, if they were *Asthmatical*: or *Commit Adultery*, ad *purgandos Renes*, as the Popish Gloss has it: And I once heard a Catholick Doctor Advise his Patient in another case *to be Drunk once a Moneth*, though for some it must be *once a week*, or 'twill not do: or they might *lye*, or *steal* to procure a *soveraign Remedy*, for these are none of the *three great ones*, either *Idolatry, Murther, or Incest*: And by this Rule if *Schism* would any way have contributed *to the Avoidance of any great danger*, they might have separated without sin.

But these Instances he confesses *come not home to his purpose*; which I agree to, but withal tell him, they *come as home*, as any of the rest, which now we must undergo the penance to hear.

§. 1. His

§. 1. His first instance that *comes home to his purpose*, is in *the Passeover* And the summe of his Reasonings from thence is thus much. This *was a great Sacrament instituted by God himself upon weighty Reasons.* (perhaps *to awe Mens childish minds into a greater Reverence of the Deity*) Made *a statute for ever throughout their generations, and the soul that observed it not was to be cut of from among his people*, 12. Exod, 11. *And the most minute Circumstances are defined, amongst other that they should eat it, with staves in their hands shooes on their feet, and their loyns girt.* By which *expression is plainly intimated (and accordingly they understood and practised) that they should eat it, in the posture of standing; yet when th y were come into the Land of Canaan, they ate it sitting, or lying, according to the usual Custom of feasting in those Countries. And this change continued till the times of our Saviour without any reproof from God; And our Saviour himself conformes to them herein, and in the same posture eats the Passeover with his Disciples:* I shall only offer these few things in answer. 1. That there appears nothing in the institution of acommand to eat *the passeover standing*; that which carries the greatest face of probability is, that God enjoyned them to have *their staves in their hands, and their shooes on their feet*, that they might be ready for a march, at Gods signal, and word of Command: which they might have, and yet sit at the Passeover, unless it be such an impossible thing to *sit with our shooes on*; or that they could not hold their staves in their hands, as well *sitting, as standing*. 2. That the Jews *understood*, and *practised accordingly*, is a precarious, groundless, and self contradicting fiction: for what *practise* of theirs could possibly evidence that they *understood* the words to enjoyn *standing*, when he confesses, *that when they were come into the Land of Canaan, they ate it sitting or lying?* unless he dreams of some such practise *in the Wilderness*, when ther was *no Passeover*. 3. Suppose a Command for *standing*; yet it might be only *pro hâc vice*; whilst *that posture* might *be symbolical* of their hasty departure out of Egypt: and *that sitting* should ever after enure, when providence should allot them more *setled Habitations*; A posture more accommodated to expres the fixed condition of the Church in the Promised Land. 4. If God commanded them to eat the Passeover *standing throughout their generations*, without any *exception* in the Canon of the institution, without any *dispensation* from the Institutor himself, then they did most certainly transgres, were guilty of sin; continued in, lived in, dyed in sin, through all their generations, for *sin is nothing else but a transgression of a Law*; and then our B. Saviour himself had transgressed his Fathers Law which he came to *fulfil*; And thus *blasphemy* must be added to *folly*, to make way for an Argument that may secure the Imposition of Ceremonies. I shall therefore conclude with more reason thus: Christ ate the Passeover in *a Table-gesture*, therefore God Allowed it, rather then thus. *God forbad sitting*, and yet *Christ sinn'd not*, though *he ate it sitting*;

From hence I will thus Argue with our *Enquirer*: Either God

commanded the Jews to *ſtand* at the eating of the Paſſeover in all ages, or not: If he did ſo command them, no cunning will excuſe them from ſin, who ate it *ſitting*: If he did *not ſo command*; Then this Inſtance *comes home to his purpoſe*, juſt as his others did: for it can never prove, that God lays *little ſtreſs* upon *Commanded Circumſtantials*, becauſe he laid ſo little upon *uncommanded ones*.

Poſitives may be altered, changed, or Aboliſhed, by the Legiſlator, when, and how far he pleaſes; but this will never prove that he lays little ſtreſs on them whilſt they are *not changed*, *not Aboliſhed*: Nor will it prove that *Man* may chop, and change, barter, and truck one of Gods leaſt Circumſtantials, becauſe the *Law-giver* himſelf may do it: He that may alter *one*, may for ought I know, alter them all, ſeeing they all bear the ſame Image, and Superſcription of Divine Authority; and he that has a commiſſion to aboliſh one, I am confident has as good a Commiſſion to aboliſh all the reſt, which none pretend to but the *Pope*, *George Fox*, and this *Enquirer*.

§. 2. His next inſtance which *comes home to his purpoſe*, is in David, who *diſtributed the Prieſts into Orders for the conveniency of their miniſtration*: *and beſides that*, *he inſtitututed Inſtrumental Muſick to be uſed in the worſhip of God*, *without any Commiſſion from God that Appears*: But this inſtance is further *from home* then any of the reſt. For. 1. That one word of his [*that Appears*] will deſtroy his whole Argument: For it was not ſimply neceſſary, that it ſhould *Appear to us*, at this diſtance of time, and under our preſent diſpenſation, That every *Prophet*, or *pious Reforming Prince*, had a commiſſion in particular for every Alteration he then made in, or about Gods worſhip: for ſeeing we *know* they had *a ſtanding Prohibition upon Record*, not *to Add to*, *or take from* Gods inſtitutions: it is ſuppoſed that they were Armed with ſuch a Commiſſion, and received particular inſtructions from the Divine will, though the wiſdom of God ſaw it not good to exemplify thoſe Commiſſions, and Inſtructions; It was enough that when God Authorized any ſuch extraotdinary Commiſſioners to Regulate the concerns of his ſervice, they produced their ſealed Letters Patents to that age, and people who were concern'd to obey them. 2. David did *not ordain Prieſts*, *and Levites*, he created *no new Order*, *or Office*, of his own head, and heart, all he did was this: ſeeing the whole Number of the *Prieſts* muſt attend upon the *Sacerdotal*, as the whole Body of the *Levites* upon the *Levitical ſervice*, and yet all could not *at once* engage therein without confuſion and diſtraction, he caſts them into *regular Courſes*, that in ſucceſſive Revolutions they might all ſhare in the work and duty. 3. David was an *Eminent Prophet*, who received directions from God in affaires of leſs moment. and as I cannot eaſily believe it, that God would call him to an employment without ſufficient adviſe how to manage it, ſo neither can I conceive that ſo holy a Perſon would enterprize any thing of this Nature, without ſuch adviſe,

adviſe, when he might ſo eaſily have it from God: And that which fully ſatisfies me herein, and may do as much for another, that is not highly concern'd to quarrel plain Scripture, is this. That when *David* had order'd *the Levites*. 1. Chron. 23. 4. 5. 6. And the *Prieſts*. Ch. 24. And *the Singers*, Ch 25. And *the Porters*. Ch. 26. And *the Captains and Prin es of the Tribes*. Ch. 27. And was come at laſt to give his Son *Solomon* particular directions about the Temple. Ch. 28. the Scripture tells us. v. 12. 13. That *David gave to* Solomon *his Son, the Pattern of the Porch, and of the houſes thereof, and the Pattern of all that he had by the Spirit; Alſo for* the Courſes of the Prieſts, and Levites, *and for all the work of the ſervice of the houſe of the Lord*: And v. 19. *All this (ſaid David) the Lord made me underſtand in writting, by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern.*

And as *David* had ſpecial direction from the Lord thus to diſtribute the *Levites, Prieſts, Singers, Porters*, for the Conveniency of their miniſtration: ſo was he to make *particular Application* to God, for the determination of the moſt *minute Circumſtances*: One would think that if there muſt be ſo many Diviſions of Prieſts, Levites, Porters, and Singers, it had been *a moſt inconſiderable Circumſtance*, which of theſe diviſions ſhould begin the Round, or Circular combination, that they might winck, and chuſe; and yet *David* uſed even in *this punctilio* a great, and ſolemn Ordinance of God, viz. *The Lot*, wherein the Alſeeing, and Alruling God Controuls the Contingency of the volubleCreature, for when *the Lot is caſt into the Lap, the whole diſpoſing thereof is of the Lord*. 16. Prov. 33. So that the very Porters, and Singers were choſen as ſolemnly, and with reſpect to Gods determination, to the order of their Courſes, as *Matthias* was choſen to be an Apoſtle, and preferred to *Barnabas* by the Deciſion of the true. 4. I will add, that it appears that this Determination of *David* was not made *Jure Regio*, but *Prophetico, & Divino*. Becauſe when that Holy Prince *Joſiah* ſet about Reformation, he Regulates *the Prieſts, and Levites* according to the order of *David*. 2. Chron. 35. 2. *He ſet the Prieſts in their Charges* — v. 3. *And he ſaid unto the Levites, prepare your ſelves by the houſes of your Fathers after your Courſes* — *According to* the writing of David, *King of Iſrael*: Which was that writing, no doubt, which he mentions 1. Chron. 28. 19. By which *God made him underſtand all thoſe things*: Now I would gladly learn what need this good, and pious Prince had to have recourſe to *Davids pattern*, to *Davids writing*, had he been acquainted with our *New Doctrine*, that *God lays very little ſtreſs upon Circumſtantials in Religion*, and might have determin'd that ſmall Matter *Jure Regio*:

And this is farther evident, in that Solomon, a Prince of great power, and wiſdom, yet was ſo punctual, and preciſe in this very thing, to order *the Courſes of the Prieſts, and* Levites, according to Davids Rubric. 2. Chron. 8 14. *He appointed alſo according to the Order of David his Father, the Courſes of the Prieſts to their ſervice: and the* Levites *to their Charges, to praiſe, and Miniſter before the Lord, as the Duty of the Day required; for ſo had* David the Man

of God *commanded*. Where we may obſerve firſt, that what David commanded herein, was not *as King*, but as the *Man of God*, a *Prophet*, or one *Commiſſioned by God* for that ſervice: and ſecondly, that David could not bind *his Succeſſors*, by any Determination of his own, meerly as a Prince, and therefore their obligation to follow that pattern, did ariſe from the Authority of God.

5. Whereas our *Enquirer* has ſearcht it ſeems, but can find *no Commiſſion* for *inſtrumental Muſick*. I have ſued out *a Melius Inquirendum*, and he may read it exemplified. 2. Chron. 29. 25. Hezekiah *ſet the Levites in the houſe of the Lord, with Cymbals*, and Pſalteries, and with Harpes. *according to the Commandement of David, and of Gad the Kings Seer, and Nathan the Prophet*: *for ſo was* the Commandement of the Lord *by the Prophets*: where we have a Commiſſion expreſs. 1. From whom, *The Lord*: by whom, *The Prophets*: To whom, *King David*: About what, *Inſtrumental Muſick*.

6. And laſtly: ſuppoſing *David* had ordered *all theſe particulars* of his *own Head*, yet will it not follow, that God lays *little ſtreſs* upon either the *omitting* what he has *commanded*; or the *Doing* what he has *prohibited*; ſeeing he ſuppoſes, that the *things ordered*, were neither *Commanded nor prohibited*: All that with Modeſty could be drawn from hence, would be no more then this little: That *a meer Circumſtance undetermined* by God, and yet *neceſſary to be Determined*, to the executing *what was determined*, might be determined by a *Prophetical perſon*: And even for this alſo He had an expreſs, and punctual warranty from the Lord.

§. 3. A third inſtance is from Sacrifices: *which* (ſays he) *though God had with great ſolemnity inſtituted as the means of propitiating his Divine Majeſty towards ſinful men, and had with great accuracy preſcribed the Laws thereof, yet he puts a great ſlight upon all of that Nature, as a thing he regarded not in compariſon of the ſubſtantial points of virtue, and obedience.* We have hence a great help to underſtand a little of our Authors mind, about thoſe *Circumſtantials in Religion*, which he ſays *God lays ſo little ſtreſs upon*. And *Sacrifices*, the *means of propitiating the Divine Majeſty towards ſinful man*, are of that Number: And hence we may alſo ſatisfy our ſelves why *Jeſus Chriſt* has *no more ſtreſs laid on him* in ſome mens Divinity; for ſeeing *He is the Means of propitiating the Divine Majeſty toward ſinful Man*, he may prove *a Circumſtantial in Religion*, and upon the Matter an *inſignificant*, or at beſt but *a ſignificant Ceremony*. But for his Anſwer I ſhall ſay theſe things.

1. It is a falſhood very opprobrious to the great Law-giver of the Church, that he ever *inſtituted*, and yet *ſlighted* what he had inſtituted, whilſt it *continued in force*. 'Tis true indeed, God always ſlighted *Hypocrites*, who offer'd thoſe Sacrifices, and they became *vain oblations*, as to any benefit they had from, or by them; but his own Ordinance he never ſlighted till Chriſt

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the Grand Propitiation had answered all their ends, and pretensions.

1. God *never slighted Sacrifices*, in *comparison* of virtue and obedience, for to *offer Sacrifices* aright, was *virtue and obedience*, but in *opposition* to sincerity, to *virtue, and obedience*: just as he would have slighted *the most splendid outward Acts* of *virtue, and obedience* without *the Heart*, which is the life, and soul of all. To *give Alms, to pray* were, and are duties of moral virtue, and obedience, and yet when the Pharisees performed both *to be seen of men*, to hunt for popular applause, God not only slights, but abominates them; not *the Acts themselves*, but *the persons* that perform'd them; not what they performed, the *outward work*, but that they kept back *the Heart*: or if the *things* yet not as commanded *in specie*: but as sinfully done *in individuo*. Thus he that commanded All men *to kiss the Son*, slighted, and abhorred *Judas his Kiss*, when made a cloak to hide his traiterous design to deliver up his Lord and Master.

Sacrifices had a threefold use. 1. *A typical use*, as leading to Christ, and in this respect God was so far from slighting them, that he laid the greatest stress imaginable on them; 2. A *Political use*, to set the Transgressor of the Law right in the Court of Justice, and to satisfy for the temporal punishment. 3. *A moral use* might be accidentally made of them too, they served well to represent some *moral virtue, or duty*. And I will not deny that God might slight this symbolical use of them, 1. Because that use had *no institution*, and we never find that God had any esteem of Symbols that were not of his own appointment, 2. Because no Ceremony, or Symbol, could represent the Moral duty, or virtue to that advantage, which the precept it self, with those encouragements and rewards propounded by God himself, were able to do.

Yet he will prove from Scripture that *God slighted Sacrifices*. 50. Ps. 8. *I will not reprove thee for thy Sacrifices*; v. 14. *Offer to God the Sacrifice of righteousness, as if he had said, let me have the latter, and I shall not much complain for defect of the former.* This is his gloss, this his proof; wherein I only blame two things.

(1) *The falshood* of it: The words may be interpreted as spoken either by way of *concession*, or *commination*. 1. By way of *concession*. *I will not reprove thee for thy Sacrifices*. q. d. Quantum ad externa Sacrificia satis ettis occupati: says a learned Person. I have no cause to rebuke you on that account, for you do your duty, you are very deligent in them: God slights not *Sacrifice*, but he requires *a better Sacrifice*, that of *righteousness*: 2. By way of *Commination*. And there is no greater argument of Gods Displeasure then when he threatens to leave a people without reproof for their Neglect of duty: Thus. 4. Hos. 17. *Ephraim is joyned to Idols let him alone.* God's not reproving for *omission of a duty*, or commission of a sin, is a sorry Reason that God lays *little stress* either upon *the duty*, or *the sin*: Thus again

14. Acts. 16. God is ſaid to have *ſuffer'd all Nations to walk in their own ways*. Gods keeping ſilence at, and non-reproof of ſin, when once it ſhall be interpreted an indulgence of ſin, his future rebuke in Thunder, and Lightning ſhall convince miſtaken Sinners of the ſolly of their comment upon the Text of Gods forbearance. And this ſeems the true ſenſe of the place we are upon. For, v. 21. God uſes parralbel language; *Theſe things haſt thou done, and I kept ſilence*, but I will *reproove thee*.

(2) I blame his gloſs of *blaſphemy*: He puts words in to Gods mouth which are the abhorrence of his ſoul. *Let me have theſe latter, and I ſhall not much complain for deficit of the former*. Strange Doctrine this! What? God not Complain for want of obedience to his Commands? He told us in the beginning, that God was *not a Captious Deity*: And now he would prove him one: He tells us that God *Inſtituted Sacrifices with great ſolemnity, as the means of propitiating his Divine Majeſty*: and now he introduces God of another mind: let them uſe the means, or not for averting his diſpleaſure, God will not much complain:

§. 4. Another Inſtance is that mentioned. Math. 12. Whereupon the occaſion of the *Diſciples rubbing the ears of corn on the Sabbath day*: and Chriſts juſtifying their fact from the example of *David*, who ate *the ſhew-bread*, in a caſe of extremity. Chriſt tells the ſuperſtitious Phariſees, I *will have mercy, and not Sacrifice*: But this will not do his work: For. 1. *The plucking of the ears of corn*, in a caſe of extremity, was not forbidden by the Law; ſo Grotius: „Neque negat Chriſtus, opus eſſe „famulam, ſed ex circumſtantiis oſtendit, factum hoc Diſcipu„lorum, Legis ſententiâ non comprehendi; eſt ergo Queſtio, Τὸ ῥητὸν, & τῆς διανοίας, ſtatûs ſcripti, & voluntatis: *Chriſt denies not that it was a ſervile work, but from the due Conſideration of circumſtances he proves, that this fact of his Diſciples was not included in the meaning of the Law*: So that the *Queſtion is between* the Letter, *and the* Equitable conſtruction *of the Law*: 2. The ſame Anſwer to the other inſtance of *Davids eating the ſhew-bread*? „Annon Legiſtis? „ſi legiſtis, hoc licitum eſſe didiciſſetis: ſi non legiſtis; „pudent vos ignaviæ veſtræ. *Have you not read?* (ſays Chriſt) *If you have read* it, *you muſt needs have learned that this fact is Lawful*: *If you have not read it: you may be aſhamed of ſloathfulneſs*. „David ejuſque Comites pari neceſſitate preſſi, quâ „nunc premuntur Diſcipuli mei, fecerunt contra τὸ ῥητὸν, „Legis De Panibus: neque tamen feciſſe cenſentur contra „τὴν διάνοιαν. Sequitur ergò nec Diſcipulos meos quic„quam hoc facto adverſus legis ſententiam committere. i. e. *David and his Companions, being urged with the ſame Exigence wherewith my Diſciples are now urged, Acted againſt the Letter of the Law concerning the ſhew-bread; yet are they not to be thought to have tranſgreſſed the true intent,*

intent, and meaning thereof; It follows therefore that my Disciples by their fact have not violated the intendment of the Law. 3. That our Saviour tells them *he will have mercy, and not Sacrifice*, has no difficulty in it, because. 1. *Negatives* are often put for *Comparatives*: I will *have mercy, and not Sacrifice*, is no more then I will have mercy *rather* then Sacrifice, when I cannot have them both. There's no Question but if *an Act of Mercy*, and *an Act of instituted worship*, should stand in Competition, all Circumstances concurring; the Act of instituted Worship ought to give place; we will suppose a Congregation assembled for the publick Worship of God, and at the same time a fire breaks out, the Church is not only Allowed, but obliged to omit the publick worship at present, and to employ their endeavours towards the quenching of the fire: And he will render himself somewhat more then ridiculous that would infer from hence, that God lays *little stress upon publick Worship*: or that God lays *less stress* upon the Churches worshipping him in publick, then upon the preserving of a House: but only that *the work of mercy* must be *now* performed, or the season is lost *for ever*: whereas the Worship of God may be reassumed. So that all the business is, That *a circumstance of undetermined time is of less weight in Gods Account*, then *an Act of Mercy, or Charity.* 1. Cor. 1. The Apostle tells them: That Christ sent him *not to baptise, but to preach the Gospel*: that is *not so much* to baptise, as to preach: which yet will never inforce, that Christ lays little stress upon the Ordinance of Baptism: our B. Saviour. 4 Luke. 26. acquaints his Disciples. That *he that Hates not Father, and Mother, cannot be his Disciple* And yet it's true too, that he *that Hates his Father or Mother cannot be his Disciple*: But by *hating* is meant only *less loving*; He *that loves not Father and Mother less then me cannot be my Disciple*: Now let the Reader judge, how absurd it would sound in his ears, to hear such Doctrine: That God lays *very little stress* upon *our filial affection*, and duty to Parents; A Doctrine worth it's weight in gold to such a Jew, that would plead *Corban* against Commandment, and evacuate the precept of God, by his own Traditions.

And sometimes that duty which God lays *the greater stress* upon, may give place *pro hic, & nunc*, to that which he lays *less weight* upon: a Father commands his Son to discharge such a service, as he is addressing himself to his duty he finds his enemies Oxe, or Asse ready to perish; in this case I conceive the Son ought to suspend the execution of his Fathers command to save the life of a beast: And yet the *Debt of Justice* which I owe my Father is greater then *the Debt of Charity* which I owe an Enemy: And thus much of his Old Testament instances.

[2] He proceeds now to those in *the New*, which must prove that *God lays little stress upon Circumstantials* under the Gospel: which he will first prove by this Argument.

If this (says he) *was the case, and condition of things under the old Testament, where God seemed so punctual in his prescriptions, so rigorous in his Animadversions, and where the danger of erring Capitally from the design of those institutions, by the least Deviation from the line of Divine Revelations was so great; then certainly in the New Testament where the Divine wisdom hath express't far less concern for such little points, may the minds of men be secure from such superstitious fears* wherein we must fairly examine. 1. the Antecedent, 2. the Consequence, 3. the Reason of the Consequence.

(1) The Antecedent, that God laid little stress upon Circumstantials, that is (as his instances bear witness) had little regard for his positive præcepts under the Old Testament: Now how false this is, in any sense, which being true would subserve his main design, I think is pretty well cleared by this time; but the *Enquirer* like a good natured Man, fearing his Answerer should be so silly as not discover his weakness, has out of a prudent forecast refuted all his own Instances. For he tells us. 1. That *God seem'd to be punctual in his prescriptions*; 2. *rigorous in his Animadversions*. 3. That the *danger of erring capitally was great*. 4. Implies that *the least deviation from the line of Revelation*, was an *errour*: Now if all this be *to lay a little stress* upon them, I despair of ever knowing what 'tis to lay *a great*: when Clergymen are *punctual in their prescriptions*, telling us when we must *bow*, and when *stand*, when *kneel*, and when sit, when look this way, when another, when speak, when hold our tongue; when they are so *rigorous in their Animadversions*, that to slip, or trip, to stumble, or grumble at compliance, shall be *an Admonition thrice with a breath*, and a dreadful excommunication at the end of all, when it shall be *criminal* if not *capital* to *deviate from the line of Humane Determination*, Dissenters are humbly bold to call this *a laying very great stress* upon Ceremonies.

(2) His consequence is, *then certainly in the N. T. the minds of men may be secure from superstitious fears*. Oh without peradventure! To see how strangely we have been out all this while! I thought verily the Question had been, whether God lays little stress upon Circumstantials under the Old Testament, and the New, and we are now flam'd off with this conclusion, that we may be *secure from superstitious fears*: which is very true, whether Christ had instituted *many Ceremonies or few*; whether he had laid *great, or little stress* upon them; but all the Policy of this lyes in a crafty insinuation, which it's to be hoped the perfunctory Reader will swallow down, That *all fears* about displeasing Christ in the Matter of instituted worship, are but *superstitious fears*.

(3) The Reason of his consequence follows: Because (forsooth) *in the N. T. the Divine wisdom has express't far less concern for such little points*. But I expected to be informed where Christ has express't *far less* concern for these points: I do not know how 'tis possible to express *far less concern*, then *a very little*: But he that

that put words into *the Fathers* mouth so lately, may make the Son also speak what he pleases, and both of them to bear false witness against themselves.

But whereas his Argument proceeds thus: If God laid so little under the O. T. upon positives, how much less under the New: I should invert his Argument, If God was so rigorous in his animadversions, so punctual in his prescriptions, when his institutions were so Numerous, his præscriptions so multiforme, what will he be when he has prescribed us *so few*, and those *so easy*, and *useful* to the Observer? If we cannot be punctual in the observation of *a very few positives* of so plain signification, how should we have repined had we been charged with a Numerous Retinue of Types, and Carnal Rudiments? If Christs yoke be accounted Heavy, how should we have sunck under the Mosaical Pædagogy? The servants of Naaman thus humbly expostulated with their Lord. 2. Kin. 5. 13. *My Father if the Prophet had Commanded thee some great thing, would'st thou not have done it? how much rather then when he saith to thee, wash and be clean?* Suppose Christ had exacted of us what *Barchocheba exacted of his Disciples*, that every one in token of absolute subjection should cut of his little finger; had it not been better *to enter into Life maimed*, then having all our joints to *be cast into hell* for our disobedience; how much more then, when he has enjoyned us only *these few*, which are *our singular priviledge*, as well as our *unquestionable Duty*? our *Benefit*, not our *Burden*; and our helps, and not our hindrances in the way to everlasting felicity: The fewer are his institutes, the more punctual will he be in exacting Conformity to them; And therefore as the *last thing* Christ instituted *before his death* was the *Ordinance of the Supper*, so the *last command* he gave *before his Ascension*, was that of *Baptizing all Nations, charging them to observe whatsoever he had commanded them.*

If a tender, and loving Husband at the point of death should recount to his beloved Spouse, all the former evidences of endearing affections, and withal tell her that he expected nothing in lieu of so great love, but that he might live in her memory, when he is dead and gone, by one only observation; surely the words of a dying friend would live in the living friend, and if there had been ever any true conjugal affection, it would operate strongly to be punctual in that single observance: our B. Saviour when he was just ready to give himself *a price of Redemption for Many*, institutes his last Supper, with the greatest punctualness Imaginable; and being ready to Dye, Commands all his faithful Followers — *Do this in Remembrance of me.* And is it not a hard case if his Church cannot afford to be tyed up precisely in *this one thing*? We read. 22. Luk. 14. That *Jesus sate down*, and the twelve Apostles with him, and v. 19. he *took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave it to them*, saying τοῦτο ποιεῖτε, *Do this in Remembrance of me*! Now it's a great Question made by some, what should be *the Antecedent*, to this Relative [τοῦτο] and the Reverend, B. *Morton* a great Patron of Ceremonies in

his Treatise of the Sacrament, cites some Jesuites thus: [*Hoc facite*:] ad *omnes præcedentes Christi actiones* refertur. And as Chemnitius upon 5. John. 28. Μὴ θαυμάζετε τοῦτο: Rectè (inquit ille) τοῦτο, *ad Totum Complexum eorum, quæ hactenus dicta sunt refertur*: so say I; this Relative [τοῦτο] in the institution of that Sacrament, *ad totum Complexum eorum quæ hactenus dicta, & facta sunt refertur. Do this*, relates to the whole complex of all those things which Christ had *done before*. And if so, then it includes *sitting down*: Or the Application of our selves to the Table *in a posture suited to a Feast*; which agrees best with the celebrated Rule of decency, seeing there's no Nation under heaven shall kneel at their meals; yes (says that Learned Bishop) but I will except *Time, and the posture of sitting*; and excepting these two Circumstantials, τοῦτο ποιεῖτε, is referred to all the rest: But then I would reply. 1. That there was no necessity to except *Time*; Because it neither was, nor possibly could be included in the Command, *Do this*: for all men that have any Ambition to speak congruously agree it to be non-sense, to say: that *Time can be done*. It must be *some action* here to which this τοῦτο ποιεῖτε must relate. 2. If he will needs except the Action of *sitting down*, I ask *Quo warranto?* why should *one Antecedent Action* be excepted more then *all the rest?* And if *one*, why are not all the rest foreprized? The Papists have excepted the whole Cup from the Laity; the Reverend Bishops have excepted *sitting*; and then why may not a third except *breaking*, a fourth, *Blessing?* and then come the *Quakers*, and the Learned *Grotius* with *a Non semper communicandum per symbola*; and shut out the whole institution: I confess I never liked *these exclusions*, ever since I saw first one parcel, and then another excluded, till at last there was *a clean House*: And thus by our *Enquirers* Maxime we have made a fine Sacrament of it, under pretence that Christ lays *little stress upon circumstantials under the New Testament*: *Little* stress did I say? Nay *None at all*, For if God layd *very little* stress upon them under *the Old Testament*, and the Divine wisdom has express't *far less* concern for them under *the New*; I cannot guess, what *that something* should be, that is *far less* then a *very little*, but a meer Nothing;

We should now examine his instances under the New Testament; but plenty has made him so poor, that he will give us *but one*; But one indeed; but that one is a great one, and may stand for *Many*: *When* (says he) *the Apostle Paul had vehemently declaimed against the Necessity of Circumcision, and proclaimed the danger of it, as is obvious to any one that reads his Epistles, yet the same Paul Circumcises Timothy, to the intent that thereby he might render himself, and his ministry more acceptable to the Jews.* This is his one, his only, great Instance out of the New Testament.

And it was but Reasonable that a person so polite, and terse in his style, should employ all the flowers of Elegancy

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to embelliſh it, and therefore for it's greater ornament, he will now uſe a Figure, which ſome by a hard Name call *Antanagoge*.

It has been hetherto taken for granted by all that I have met with, that the Apoſtle *Circumciſed Timothy* ſome good while before he wrote *any one of his Epiſtles*, and ſomewhat longer before he wrote thoſe wherein he *proclaims the danger of Circumciſion*. The firſt Epiſtle that he wrote was that firſt *to the Theſſalonians*: And (not long after) *the ſecond to the ſame Church*: The poſtſcripts to both which, Date them *from Athens*, where we find him *Acts*. 17: But the learned Dr. *Lightfoot* judges, and I think upon clear grounds, that they were penned *a year after*, and written from *Corinth*. But whether from *Athens*, or *Corinth*, both muſt needs be written *after the Circumciſion of Timothy*, which we find Acts. 16. 1. In his journey to *Lyſtra and Derbe*: And the Learned Eſtius is of the ſame judgment with our own Learned Doctor: The Learned *Whitaker* alſo concurrs thus farr with them, Qu. 6. contra Humanas Tradit: p. 415. „Novi Teſtamenti Canonem non fuiſſe tum edi-„tum cum Paulus hanc Epiſtolam ad Theſſalonicenſes ſcriberet (he ſpeaks of the ſecond Epiſtle written the ſame year with the former) „imò ne ullos quidem N. T. libros tum fuiſſe ſcriptos „affirmo, excepto ſolo Matthæi Evangelio, & (ſi irenæo cre-„dimus) etiam Matthæi Evangelio Antiquiores fuiſſe hæ duæ. If then *theſe two Epiſtles* were the firſt he wrote; and they written from *Athens*, according to their poſtſcripts, or from Corinth, as indeed they were; It's certain that they, and therefore *all the reſt*, muſt be written ſome time *after the Circumciſion of Timothy*;

Here is then a moſt deſperate ſtumble ſomewhere or other; unleſs he can prove, (and what can he not prove) that St. *Paul's* journey to *Lyſtra*, and *Derbe* was after his journey to *Athens*, *and Corinth*, which unleſs he ſhowes himſelf a ſcorn to the Reader he will not attempt.

The inſtance being ſo impertinent, we need not much be concern'd about the winding up of his concluſion: yet becauſe ſome may have a mind to be pleaſant, let us have it.

In which carriage of his he has beyond all exception demonſtrated to us, that all Ceremonial Appendages are perfectly ſubordinate, and ought to yeild to the deſigns of peace, charity, and edification, as the greater good: yes this is Demonſtration: infallible Demonſtration! Demonſtration which puts the Controverſy beyond all exception, and the poor Non-conformiſts are ſiderated with the violence of it. And yet to ſpeak plain Engliſh, here's nothing but pittiful trifling: For. 1. This Irrefragable Demonſtration is reared upon a rotten foundation; that Paul wrote his Epiſtles firſt, wherein he declaims againſt Circumciſion, and then afterwards Circumciſes Timothy. 2. All that he has built upon that foundation is as rotten. That *all Ceremonial Appendages are perfectly ſubordinate, and ought to yeild to peace, charity, and edification*: let me obſerve. §. 1. If theſe *Ceremonial Appendages* be

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ſo perfectly ſubordinate to thoſe great ends; then how will it prove that God lays *very little ſtreſs* on them? Juſt as if ſome ſuperacute Philoſopher ſhould undertake to prove, that becauſe eating and ſleeping are *perfectly ſubordinate* to Health, and life, therefore we ought to lay very little ſtreſs on them.

§. 2. If thoſe inſtitutions of the Goſpel which he calls *Ceremonious Appendages*, ſhould at any time croſs the great ends of *peace, charity, and edification*, there's no doubt but that they ought to ſtrike ſail, but he cannot prove that the meaneſt of Chriſts inſtitutions are oppoſite at any time, to *a juſt peace*, that they *weaken Chriſtian charity*, or *hinder edification*: Nor can we ſuppoſe without the higheſt derogation to the Divine wiſdom, That any of Chriſts means for edification ſhould ever overthrow their deſigned ends. Their *ſubordination* to the end ſhows their inferiority to the end; but ſince Chriſt has allotted them their place, let no man dare to diſturb their ſtation.

§. 3. If *Divine Ceremonial Appendages* ought to give place and yeeld to peace, charity, and edification; then we may preſume without preſumption, that *Humane Ceremonial Appendages* ſhall be compelled to ſubmit, and conform themſelves to thoſe great ends, and that none ſhall ever lay ſuch a ſtreſs upon theſe as may endanger, much leſs deſtroy thoſe glorious intendments. But here we are diſappointed! God muſt lay little ſtreſs upon his, but they will lay incredible weight upon theirs. And as one ſaid γαῖα μιχθήτω πυρὶ: let heaven, and earth be blended and jumbled together in an eternal *Chaos*, It's a principle to be maintained to the Death, that no Ceremony ought to yeeld to the recovery of Peace, the reviving of frozen charity, and promoving edification.

And now to ſhut up all, and himſelf, and whole diſcourſe out of doors, he Recommends to us 14. Rom. 17. *The Kingdom of God (that is, the Goſpel)* is not *meat, and drink, that is, conſiſts not or lays little ſtreſs upon thoſe nice and perplexing matters, but in righteouſneſs, peace and joy*: whence ſome would be ready enough to infer that that Church which lays *very great ſtreſs upon theſe nice and perplexing matters*, is *none of the Kingdom of God*: And I ſhall only deſire him to add for a cloſe that A poſtolical Golden Canon, v. 20. *For meat deſtroy not the work of God*: do not by *unſeaſonable uſing*, much leſs by *rigorous Impoſing* things *Indifferent* much leſs *things doubtful*, and leaſt of all, things *ſinful in their uſe*, deſtroy ſouls created of God, Redeemed by Chriſt, and capable of eternal Happineſs; where God has Commanded, let him be obeyed, not diſputed, not cavilled out of his right, and where God has laid little weight, let none make their *little fingers* an inſupportable burden.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Whether the Magiſtrate hath Authority to determine ſuch Externals of Religion as are the Matters of our Diſpute?

FAbulam Auditor lege, Lector audi! when *the Eagle*, perſecuted by *the Beetle*, could find no place of ſafe Retreat, ſhe prudently depoſites her Eggs in Jupiters Royal Lap, but he rather then endure the perpetual vexation about a Birds neſt, ſhakes them out of his Robe, and at once daſht all the Hopes of an Aiery of Eagles: Our Ceremonies have ſometimes ſhelter'd themſelves under the pretence of *Decency*, and yet under that ſpecious covert could not be ſecure; thence they fled for Refuge into the Abſtruſe Receptacles of venerable Antiquity, and Longæve cuſtom. Yet from thoſe Burroughs have they been hunted. The Churches Authority to judge of the Lawfulneſs, and to impoſe what ſhe ſo adjudged Lawful amongſt the numerous Tribe of indifferencies was nextly pleaded, but upon more ſevere Reſearches into the Records, no ſuch commiſſion can be found. At laſt therefore they have taken ſanctuary under Conſtantins Purple, and when Princes ſhall be weary of protecting them againſt the purſuit of Scripture, they will fairly ſhake them thence alſo, and leave them to ſhift for themſelves.

That the Perſons, and Authority of Magiſtrates are moſt ſacred, *the one*, not to be toucht with common, and unclean hands; *the other*, not to be profaned with Irreligious Breath, all Proteſtants muſt acknowledge: of which deep things, whilſt we diſcourſe it, will be ſeaſonable to caution our ſelves from the Royal Prophet, Pſ. 131. *Not to exerciſe our ſelves in great matters, or in things too high for us.* Where though the Humble Lamb may ſafely wade, the Caſtle-bearing Elephant muſt be forced to ſwim.

I look upon the extent of the Princes power to be as far beyond my Reach as the *Primum mobile*; which though I can neither touch, nor meaſure, yet may ſay, there is *a Being* beyond it: thus though it were unpardonable boldneſs *to Determine* its bounds, or ſay *Thus farr ſhall it go, and no farther*, yet a truly Loyal heart may conceive, and a modeſt tongue expreſs, *There is a God above it.*

That the Magiſtrate is *Cuſtos utriuſque Tabulæ*. The great *Fiduciary of Gods Law*; is not ſo much *a Confeſſion* extorted from us, by Rack of Scripture, as our Triumph that he is ſo: Rejoycing in it with thankfulneſs to the Almighty, who has made him *a Nurſing Father* to his Church.

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To preserve the worship of God in purity, and his worshippers in Peace, is a Flower of the Crown Imperial, which Adornes the Royal Diadem farr more then all it's own Diamonds, and Rubies; and gives him a more Orient Lustre, that he serves *the King of Kings, and Lord of* Lords, then if he had grasped the universal Monarchy, and brought mankind to adore his footstool.

As no forreign power can justly pretend to intermeddle with his Government at home, so no person of whatever Character *at home*, ought to own a dependance upon any forreign Potentate *Abroad*. Let *every soul be subject to the higher Powers*: upon which words Holy *Bernard* thus: *si omnis anima; ergo & vestra: Quis vos excepit ab universalitate? Qui tentat excipere, tentat decipere. If every soul: Then yours also* (ye Ecclesiasticks!) *for who made* you *an exception from the General Rule? the Pope that* would exempt you from your Soveraigns Jurisdiction, does but expose you to the Indignation of God.

What is the *ne plus ultra*, the utmost extent of this Power in *Civil*, and *Religious* concerns, for such pittiful creatures as we are to determine, were at once to discover our folly, and betray our pride: And yet we may say without offence, though *Princes* are called *Gods*; They shine with borrowed Beams, from the Divine Majesty, the fulness of whose power is Incommunicable: And Propriety with Law in the former case, and God with Conscience in the latter, will go as near to be the shoars, that shall terminate this Ocean, as any two things that shall measure with them for exactness.

There are two sorts of Persons that fancy they have laid an eternal obligation upon Princes, beyond all possibility of requital: The first are they who would entitle them to an absolute Right to, and Dominion over the possessions of their subjects: The second, they would make them soveraign Lords of Conscience: Thus the great Hooker, Eccles. Polity. p. 26. *In litigious and controverted Causes, when they come by Authority, to be Determined, It is the will of God, that we should do accordingly, though it seems (yea perhaps truly seems) in our private judgment, or opinion, it's utterly disallowed by the Law of God.* And yet these Men are truer friends to their own Interest, then the Princes in this Matter; for whilst they deck his Atchievements, with Titulado's, impracticable, useless and cumbersome Regalities, they are sure to make provision for themselves, and wisely lick their own fingers: for thus it has ever been the cheap way of Churchmen to sell shadows for substances; as his Holiness sells the shred of *a Lambskin* to an Arch-Bishop for a thousand pounds sterling, and *a Consecrated Rose* for more then his whole *Belvedere* is worth.

When the *Enquirer* then is so Zealous to become the Princes Champion *in Spirituals*, I hope he understands, on which side *his Bread is butter'd*, and will speak two good words for himself, whilst he speaks one for the Magistrate; And when he has a little Reproacht others, and magnified his own sincerity in this undertaking,

taking, he wipes his mouth decently, ſtroaks his Beard gravely, and Reaſons moſt profoundly upon theſe two Heads.

[1] *That the Magiſtrate exceeds not his Commiſſion when he interpoſes for the Determination of the Circumſtantials of Religion.*

This Propoſition thus looſely hung, may be owned or diſowned according to every mans humour; Diſſenters may ſubſcribe it, whithout the leaſt prejudice to their cauſe. or Reflection upon their practiſe; and they may deny it too, when they have done, whithout fear of ſelf-contradiction, or danger of entrenching upon the Magiſtrates Authority. For. 1. What muſt we underſtand by [interpoſing] If I might freely deliver my own private opinion; It's *Lawful*, nay *expedient*, nay *neceſſary*, that he *interpoſe*, or elſe I am affraid his poor diſſenting ſubjects will be worried to death: But they who plead ſo Zealouſly for his *Interpoſing*, when that *interpoſition* is not tempered to their good liking, make the vault of Heaven echo again with their clamours that the Diſtreſſed Church is quite undone. In a word: if Church-men will be Determining one thing after another, that we can ſee no end; New ſubſcriptions, New oaths, new jeſts, New Ceremonies, ſuperconformity to the Canon, above Law; and practiſe above Canon; what will become of the ſimplehearted Laicks, if a vigilant and prudent Prince do not *interpoſe*, and timouſly *determine* upon their Determinations. 2. I now utterly deſpair of underſtanding his Meaning of *Circumſtantials*: A word that has run through as many ſhapes as are in all *Ovid's Metamorphoſis*; And amongſt all the pleaſant ſtories in that ingenious Romance, I remember one that the Reader will not condemn for impertinent.

There was one *Eziſichthon*, whoſe *βυλιμία*, and extream voracious ſtomack had no other ſupply at laſt, but from *one Daughter*: now this Madamoiſelle (you muſt know) had a ſingular faculty to transform her ſelf into any ſhape ſhe pleaſed: once he ſold her for a round ſumme, and ſhe came trotting, or ambling home again (for ſhe had all her paces) in the ſhape of a bonny filly: Another time he ſold her, and received his money honeſtly for her, and ſhe came home in the ſhape of a Milck-cowe. Such another ambiguous, verſatile Creature is this [Circumſtantial] If we ſhould ſay, the Magiſtrate has no power to Determine *Circumſtantials*, preſently he's oth' top oth' Houſe: what an obſtinate generation are thoſe Fanaticks! What will you not allow your Prince to appoint where you ſhall aſſemble for your publick worſhip of God? muſt he have no concern in *time*, and *place*, in order to the ſecuring of the Peace? yes! yes Sir! withal our hearts, and we ſhall be heartily glad on't, humbly thankful for it, and honeſtly proud on't too, and I would we could preavail with our *Enquirer* to be our *Sollicitour* to procure us a Determination of thoſe Circumſtantials: well then (ſays he) you agree the Magiſtrate may Determine

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Circumstantials, but such are *the Ceremonies*, and now you are in a cloos, get out again how you can.

3. Therefore he should have resolved plainly whether the Magistrates Commission extends to the Determination of *all*, or only some certain Circumstances; and my Reasons are these. 1. If he have not a Commission to Determine *All*, then the question will Recurr, *whether it reaches those under Debate?* for thus he Argues. *Circumstantials* may be Determined by the Magistrate: But *Ceremonies* are *Circumstantials*. Therefore *Ceremonies may be Determined by the Magistrate*: Now if the *Major in* this Syllogism be not *universal*, the Syllogism is peccant *in forme*; If it be: then deprecating the Displeasure of those whom we truly Honour *in the Lord*, *and for the Lord* we humbly deny it. All Circumstantials may not be Determined by the Magistrate, for. 2. Christ has already Determined of *some Circumstantials*, and whoever makes it one, it's no Question with me, that no power on earth can *undetermine*, or *otherwise determine*, what God has already *fore determined* 3. There are *some Circumstantials* which cannot *profitably*, and therefore not *Lawfully* receive an universal, and uniform Determination. 4. Because if all undetermined Circumstances may be Determined in *their use*, the life of Man may be made the most wretched miserable and undesirable thing in the world; and he had as good preach that other more eligible, and more edifying Doctrine, *Ita, & de te literam longam facito!* for where should the most cautelous foot tread besides a snare? and such is the Condition of superstitious Papists, whose consciences are perpetually perplexed with endless scrupulosities about those minutes which the Church has made *sin*, which else had been as Innocent in offensive things as a piece of powdred Beef, and Turneps.

Now for the proof of this Doctrine, he tells us: *It has been fully, and substantially done by the incomparable Hugo Grotius, and by a late eminent Divine of this Church, that it's enough to referr the Reader to them.* Indeed he must be an *incomparable* Person that can write *Substantialy*, about *Circumstantials*, but I confess I do not build much either upon the Authority or Reasonings of the otherwise *incomparable Hugo*, ever since I read his dangerous discourse, Lib. 1. cap. 4. §. 13. *de jure* B. & P. , Si rex habeat partem Imperii, partem alteram Populus, , Senatus; Regi in partem non-suam in volanti, vis justa oppon , poterit; quia eatenus Imperium non habet; Quod, locun , habere sentio, etiamsi dictum sit, *Belli potestatem penes Re* , *gem fore*: id enim de Bello externo intelligendum est; cun , alioqui quisquis partem summi Imperii habeat, non possit nor , jus habere eam partem tuendi, quod ubi sit, potest etiam Rex , suam Imperii partem, Belli Jure, Amittere, that is: *If King hath one part of the soveraign Power, and the People, or Sena the other part; If the King shall invade that part which is none of h own, just resistance may be made against him, because* so farr *hath no Authority at all: which I judge to hold true, although it h*

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said, That the power of making warr is in the King; *for that must be understood of a forrain warr; whenas otherwise, whoever has a share in the soveraignty, cannot but have also Authority to Defend that share; which when it so falls out, the King may lose by the right of warr his own share of the soveraignty* Here is dangerous Doctrine enough to Cure me of my Ambition of ever being a *Hugonot*.

As for that *late eminent Divine of this Church*, who has so convincingly asserted *this power*, I cannot divine who it should be, unless perhaps that *Longwinded Author*, with whose elucubrations some are *resolved to vex the Fanatics though they never read him* themselves. And therefore leving these voluminous Authors to scold it out with their own Mouths, let us attend to the *enquirers* more concise Reasonings.

(1) *It's certain* (says he) that *Magistrates had once such a power in the Circumstantials of Religion, and that in the old Testament.* It is certain indeed that they had *a power* not only in the *Circumstantials*, but the *substantials* of Religion, all the Question is, whether they had *such a power* as he pleads for. And if they had it, then whether they had it, *jure Regio*, or *Prophetico*? whether in their *own Right as Kings*, or *by Delegation* in some extraordinary case *from God*?

§. 1. The Prince might have, nay he had a power to spur up, and quicken the lazy Priests, and Levites to their duty, and yet no power *to create them a duty*: He had power to punish Churchmen, to restrain the exorbitances of the Clergy, and for Male-administration to cashiere them, nay to order the High-priest himself, if he proved factious, seditious, or Rebellious, and endeavoured any Alteration of the *Theocracy either in Church or State*, but he had no power to make *New administrations*; He had a power to restore the corrupted worship to it's primitive integrity, but he had no power *to institute Worship*; and therefore it's more then Ridiculous to Argue from *a Power*, to *such a power*.

§. 2. He pretended to prove, That *the Magistrate in Determining these circumstantials, did not exceed his Commission*: and his *medium* is from *the Jewish Magistrate*. Now his propet, direct, and easy way to have evinced that the *Jewish Magistrate* had this power, had been to have exemplifyed *the Commission it self*, and not stand trifling with *Matter of fact*, to prove *Matter of right*, especially seeing that the Commission is *upon Record*; and many doubts *in Law* will arise from *the fact*, as whether *what was done* was done *jure*? and if *jure*; then *Quo jure*? Now for the Commission from him *by whom Kings reign*, it was ready drawn of old only a blanck left to insert the Name of that *particular Person*, whom God *immediately* or *by succession* should chuse. 17. Deut. 18. 19. 20. *It shall be when he sitteth upon the Throne of the Kingdom, that he shall write him a Copy of this Law in a book out of that which is before the Priests, and Levites; and it shall be with him, and*

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he shall read therein all the days of his life; that he may learn to fear the Lord his God to keep all the words of this Law, and those statutes to do them; that his heart be not lifted up above his Brethren, that he turn not aside from the Commandement, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end he may prolong his days in the Kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel: from whence 'tis evident, that though the Israelites were for some time in their minority govern'd by Judges, yet when their Nation should grow up to it's greatest perfection, God would then bestow upon them the most perfect form of Government, viz. Monarchy, and in the most perfect manner continue it, viz. by succession, not impeaching his own prerogative to alter either the form or the time, but with a Negative upon any, or all the people, so is it as plain that God fyes up his Prince to Govern by the משנה תורה: the Deuteronomy, a Copy of the Laws and statutes Morel and positive, *without turning* to the right *hand or the left*, in excess, or defect, mangling, or mending Gods Laws. Allowing to himself still a power to vary, but not to them *save by his Direction.*

§. 3. This great proof for *the Magistrates power over the Circumstantials of Religion*, is fetcht from the Magistrates power in *the Jewish Commonwealth*; He that is so severe upon the Nonconformists, that they are *Judaizers* if they argue but *a fortiori* from *Moses* to *Christ*, now takes his greatest proof from *David* to the *Christian King*. and though it be scandalous for them to Reason from that Topick in Doctrinals, yet is safe and honourable for himself to Reason thence in *Politicals, and Ceremonials*, his instances come now to be considered.

§. 1. *David* (*as I shewed before*) *altered somethings and instituted others in the Temple worship*. That's his instance: And *David* (as I proved before) altered nothing, instituted nothing, *without special Direction from God*, that's my answer: which special warrant when it shall be produced for any *Alterations* of, or *Additions to* Christs institutions under the Gospel, they shall by me be most Cordially embraced.

§. 2. *Hezekiah* (says he) *without a Scripture for it, broke the Brazen Serpent to pieces, though it was a Symbolical Ceremony of Gods own Institution*. Oh but if Hezekiah had *set up one brazen Serpent* as a Symbolical Ceremony, *without Gods institution*, it had been more to his purpose, then if he had *broken a hundred*. Let him take these few things along with him, and then make the best he can of his instance: 1. If Hezekiah needed no Scripture warrant to destroy an old Antiquated *Institution of God*, because it had been, and still was *abused to Idolatry*, much more may a Christian Prince without further Scripture warrant abolish such *Symbolical Ceremonies*, as being originally the meer *inventions of men*, have been, and still are *abused to the most fowle Idolatry*, and grossest superstition that ever was in the world. 2. Let the *Enquirer* recollect himself

himself a little. He undertook to prove that Princes have power to *set up* Ceremonies, and his instance proves only thus much, that they have power to *pluck them down*. 3. Hezekiah needed no Scripture to empower him to destroy the brazen Serpent, because it was *then no institution* of God: It had been *once indeed* a *temporary* appointment of God, but the ceasing of *the End* was the Determination of *the use*; when it's *sacred Relation* ceased, it was of no more value in Gods account when Hezekiah broke it, then *so much Brass*. 'Tis not true therefore that *Hezekiah broke in pieces the brazen Serpent, though it was*, but though it *had been formerly* an institution of God He did not *make it*, but *declare it*, to be *Nonsuchtan*, an *old Relique*, made a *New Idol*, and now served, as it deserved. 4. I do not understand that the brazen Serpent was *a Symbolical Ceremony*, what *grace*, *what duty* did it signify? *A type* it was, to direct their faith to Christ for that time, to expect the healing of their souls from him, but the visible service was only to heal their bodies stung with the firy Serpents. 3. John. 14. *As Moses lifted up the Serpent in the Wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up?* 5. Hezekiah had Scriptures more then one, not only *to enable*, but *Command* him to do it. He needed *no new Authority*, but new wisdom to Apply *an old general Command* to a *particular case*. If *the Enquirer* could but shew as much Scripture warrant for the setting up *one Ceremony*, as *Hezekiah* had for destroying *a thousand Idols*, he would think himself a jolly fellow. I might urge his Authority from *the second Commandement*, where God declares himself *a jealous God* in the Matter of instituted worship, and how many following generations might smart for the prevarication in that particular, he well knew: There might have been *a Drachm* of the *brazen Serpent*, as well as *an Ounce* of the *Golden Calf*, in their subsequent calamities; if he that was *Custos utriusque Tabulæ*, and now had not his name for nothing, had not testifyed against that abomination: But I shall crave leave to Remember him of the *incomparable Hugo*, who upon this fact *of Hezekiah* thus. „ Egregium Documentum Regibus, at quam- „ vis bene instituta, sed non necessaria, ubi ἐπὶ τὸ χεῖρον malè „ usurpantur, è conspectu tollant, ne ponant offendiculum Cæcis. *A Notable Lesson to all Kings, to remove out of the way such things, however at first well instituted (yet not at present necessary) when they are commonly abused, that they become not a stumbling block to the Blind.* Where we see the incomparably quicksighted *Hugo* could find a Scripture to justify *Hezekiah*, and yet it was very farr fetcht, from 27. Deut: 18. *Cursed be he that maketh the blind to wander out of the way.* And yet he has a clearer vindication of *Hezekiah's* fact from Scripture: where speaking of their *Burning Incense* to the brazen Serpent, he thus expresses himself. *Quod inter illa erat quæ Dei solius honori Reservata, extra Templum, usurpari non licebat. Which* (Incense) *being in the number of those things, which were peculiarly appropriated to the worship of God, might not be Lawfully*

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used out of the Temple. 30. Exod. 38. *Whosoever shall make like unto it to smell thereto, shall even be cut off from his people:* But what need all these circumlocutions, when God commanded his people, 34 Exod. 13. To *destroy the Altars, break the Images, cut down the groves* of the Nations, for that he is *a jealous God*, That wise and discerning Prince could easily see the Command reach't all the Instruments, and utensils of Idolatry, especially those found amongst *his own people, his people in Covenant*, for whom thus to transgress, was to provoke him *to his face.*

§. 3. But his great instance is from *Hezekiahs* celebrating the Passeover otherwise then God had Commanded, & in that *one fact* he finds several branches of his variation from the first institution.

As (1) *He caused the Passeover to be kept by all Judah, and Israel on the second Moneth, though it was not according to the divine Institution, but done by the advice of* his Council *upon pious and prudential Considerations*: 2. *Chron.* 30. 5. Old Objections must be content with old Answers. [1] Hezekiah had sufficient warrant from the word of God to celebrate the Passeover *at that time*, pro hâc vice, the people being under *those Circumstances*: 9. Numb. 10, 11. *If any man of you shall be unclean by reason of a Dead body, or be in a journey afarr of, yet he shall keep the Passeover unto the Lord. The fourteenth day of the second moneth at even shall they keep it.* That we may reach the full Intendment of this Deuteronomy, or *after Law*, we must carefully attend to the occasion of it. In v. 6. *There were certain men that were defiled by a Dead body, that they could not keep the Passeover on that Day*, the day of the institution; this was a case seeming inconsiderable, and such whereon our *Enquirer* would have laid *very little stress*, made no bone of it, being *a Circumstantial, a Nicetie* about *the Time*, but the people being more Conscientious brought the case to *Moses*; and he found it so weighty, that it needed *the Resolution of God* himself; v. 8. *stand still, and I will hear what the Lord will Command concerning you.* Why, what needed that? Had he not all *Kingly power* within himself? had he not his *Council of the seventy two*? might he not have first Determin'd it to be *a Circumstantial*, and then have determin'd what he pleased about *a sorry Circumstance*? or was he so meanly instructed in *the extent of his Royal authority*? and how *little stress God laid* upon these circumstantials? well, nevertheless he will consult the Lord for a Determination of the case: whereupon God gives him that command which we have already heard, v. 10. 11. wherein I observe. 1. That though that Question was propounded only concerning that particular case, of a Person *unclean by a dead Body*; Yet the gracious God, who well knew, that *many other incident cases* of the like Nature would emerge out of the various providences which they would come under in aftertimes, and that they would still be at a loss for resolution about their Duty therein, Answers also concerning him, that was *in a Journey, or farr from home*; which Philo understands De peregrinatione in Regionem à Judæâ longè Dissitam; the *very*

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case of the ten Tribes in *Hezekiahs* time. 2. That under these enumerated particulars, of being *defiled by a dead body*, or *in a journey*, were comprehended all other *irregularities*, which might render them *uncanonically meet*, *to observe the Passover*: *Ita statuit Philo.* (says our *Synopsis*) *quia eadem est Ratio omnium.* There's *a Parity of Reason*, which reaches all other cases: This then was the case of *the ten Tribes*, they were *afarr of*, kept from the worship of God by many pressing Circumstances, for which God in this provisional *post-Law* had taken care: And for *Judah*, they were *defiled*, all things out of course, worship decayed, the Temple polluted, Sacrifices neglected, and universal disorder, and therefore under the case of *defilement by a dead body*, God makes provision for them also, for *eadem est ratio omnium*: thus. v. 3. *They could not keep it at that time, because the Priests had not sanctified* themselves sufficiently, Impedimentum, hic erat illi simile, nempe justum, illi enim Dies mensis primi, (quibus Phase erat Observandum) Templo expurgando consumpti sunt: And both Protestants, and Papists, Junius, Piscator, Estius, Lyra, Martyr, vindicate *Hezekiah's* proceedings from that General Law, Numb. 9.

[2] Whereas the *Enquirer* would insinuate, that the King did all this by the *advise of his* (privy) *Council*, he may know that there was *another Council* of more Authority in the concerns of Religion, which being appointed by God himself, might more reasonably have been consulted: once more I will hear Grotius, *de jure Belli, & Pacis*, Lib. 1. cap. 3. §. 20., Hæc cum ita sint, tamen Aliqua judicia Regibus Adempta. Arbitror manssisse penes *Synedrium* 70 virûm, quod divino imperio, à *Mose* institutum ad *Herodis* tempora perpetuâ cooptatione duravit; Itaque & Moses, & David *Judices*, *Deos* vocant, & judicia vocantur *judicia Dei*, & judices dicebantur non humanâ, sed Divinâ vice judicare; imò apertè distinguuntur *Res Dei*, *à Rebus Regis*; 2. Chron. 19. 11. ubi Res Dei, monentibus doctissimis Hebræorum. Judicia ex lege Dei exercenda, intelligi debeant; *Although these things be thus, yet I conceive that some judicial matters, exempted from the Kings Cognizance*, were *under the jurisdiction of the Sanedrin*; *which being instituted by Moses, at the Command of God, endured in a Continual succession, to the days of Herod*: and therefore both Moses *and David call the Judges* (of that Council) *Gods*: *and their judgments are called* the judgments of the Lord; *and the Judges are said to judge not in* Mans Name, *but in* Gods. And *hence is it that the* Matters of God, *and the* Matters of the King *are apparently distinguished*. 2. *Chron.* 19.11, *where* by the Matters of God (*as the most learned of the Jews inform us*) *we are to understand, the determining of cases out of Gods Law.* And thus also the same *Grotius* upon this place. Ad v. 2. *The King had taken counsel. and his Princes, and all the Congregation in Jerusalem*; id est, *inquit Grot.* συνεγωγης μεγαλης. And the meaning is plainly this, That the King and his Princes, (or privy Counsellours) advised with the Sanedrin, whether it were

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Lawful in this exigency for both *Judah, and Israel* to keep the Passeover in the second moneth, by vertue of that declaration of God. *Numb.* 9. And the Court did agree in the affirmative *Nemine contradicente.* [3] But let us suppose the worst that can be imagined, that *Hezekiah* had varied from the Canon of the Institution, yet did he make *a Canon* that they should transgress it for ever? Suppose that in a perplexed time he kept it once on *the second Moneth*, when *Necessity*, an old evil Counsellour (when not directed by Gods word) stood at his elbow, and had his ear; yet did they not ever after observe it on the first Moneth? If he brought *Judah* to *Israel* at this time, *Israel* must come up to *Judah* at other times: Men may turn the stream of Gods institutions which way they will, but they will find their old Channel again in time: Truth was before errour, and it will be after it; and therefore both *King and People*, when the Reason of this seeming irregularity ceased, ceased their practise; but will this justify any to take any Ordinance from its proper Hinges, and force it to turn for ever upon other Centers?

This was indeed the great Transgression of Jeroboam, in divine Worship. 1. Kin. 12. 32. Who ordained *a Feast in the eight moneth, on the fifteenth day of the moneth, like unto the Feast that is in Judah, — Even the moneth that he devised of his own heart.* 'Tis true he was a Person obnoxious upon many other Accounts, guilty of other superstitions and encroachments upon Gods Authority, and yet the Scripture takes special notice, and severely brands him for the Altering of *the moneth*, the *Circumstance of time*, without better warrant then he had from his *own heart*, or the *Regal Authority*. [4] Still admitting that this was done besides the primitive institution, or the warrant of that after-Law, yet still *the Prophets of the Lord were in Judah*, with whom in extraordinary cases both *King, Princes, People, and great Councel* might advise: and must we needs think that so prudent, so pious a Prince would run upon his own Head, in a matter of such concern, when he might so easily have received particular instructions from Heaven? [5] Supposing still more then all this comes to, that his practise was besides *the primitive pattern, not warranted by Numb.* 9. that he had *no Lawful Direction from the Sanedrin*, nor from *any of the Lords Prophets*, (which yet can never be disproved) but that he made this alteration meerly *Jure Regis* (which can never be proved) yet did he not set up *any one Mystical Ceremony*, appointed no other *worship, part of worship, means of worship*, only he determined of the time *for that once*: which though it had been a presumption too high for the greatest Prince to attempt, (as the case then stood) yet it came *far short* of appointing *New institutions*, or *Symbolical Ceremonies*.

(2) A second branch of his variation from the primitive pattern, he give us from v. 17. *Where he appointed the Levites to kill the Passover, which by Gods appointment was to have been performed by the people themselves*: wherein he supposes, That by the

the Institution *the people ought to kill the Passover*; that *Hezekiah* non-obstante that Institution appointed the *Levites* to do it; that he did this *without Divine Direction*, and yet was *perfectly innocent* in what he did.

§. But 1. Whether by Gods appointment the *Paschal Lamb* was to be slain by the *people*, or *the Priest*, is a Question that has been ventilated by no small Names: and though it seems most probable that *the people* were entrusted with that service, yet the *grounds are too weak*, the train of *Consequences too many* and intricate, for a wise Man to erect a superstructure of that height, and weight upon it, that *Princes may from thence dispense with Gods Law.*

They that hold that the Master of the Family was not Commanded to slay it in his own Person, do urge 12. Exod. 27. *It is the Sacrifice of the Lords Passover.* And if *a Sacrifice*, then to be performed by *a Priest*, and whereas it is said. ver. 6. That *the whole assembly of the Congregation of Israel should kill it*, they answer, Jugulent, id est *Jugulari curanto*, nempe per Sacerdotes. That *their killing* was no more then their *taking care* that *the Priests* should kill it.

As to my own private Judgment, I conceive that the Master of every Family was *a Priest* within his *own Temple*, and did perform that service according to the primitive Institution; but that assoon as God had chosen out *the Family of Aaron* to Minister unto him in that Holy employment, *all the powers that lay dispersed, and scatter'd up and down particular families* were thereby *united*, *and devolved upon that family which God had called.* And that this notwithstanding the people in this as well as other Sacrifices had some hand in the oblation of it.

Abarbinel reckons up *ten things* in a Sacrifice; *five* of which he assigns to the *people*. 1. To put their hands upon the head of the Sacrifice. 2. The killing it. 3. The taking of the skin. 4 The dividing it into parts. 5. The washing of the entrails. The other five he allots to the Priest. 1. To receive the blood in Basins. 2. To sprinkle it. 3. To kindle the fire on the Alter. 4. To order the wood. 5. To take the parts of the flesh that were sacrificed.

§. 2. Whether *Hezekiah* Commanded the Levites to kill the Passeover against the Rule of the Institution? is yet another Question. For. 1. It's the judgment of some, that in *Hezekiah's Passover* the Levites did not *Personally* kill the Lamb, but only *deliver it into the hands of the Priests* to be killed. So Menochius: *Existimo rem ita peractam esse, ut populus Immundus, Agnos Levitis darent; Levitæ ad Sacerdotes afferrent, qui eos immolarent. I conceive* (says he) *that the matter was thus transacted, that the people being unclean, delivered the Lambs to the Levites, who handed them to the Priests, and they slew, and Sacrificed them.* 2. It seems more probable that *the Levites* did actually slay the Passeover, as also those other Sacrifices. Chapt. 29. v. 34. And in justification hereof I affirm, that if it was besides the order of the first Institution, yet it was agreeable to *the after Determination* of God himself, and that whatever concern the Levites had therein,

it was appointed them *jure Divino*, *non Regio*. And if ſo; then how will it evince, that the Prince had this power over Gods inſtitutions, becauſe God had ſuch a power to alter, and change the firſt inſtitution according as he in wiſdom ſaw good?

Now that whatever change was made, was wholy by the Command of God, I think will be evident from theſe Scriptures. 2. Chron. 35. 3. 4. 5. 6 *And* (Joſiah) *ſaid unto the Levites — Serve now the Lord your God, and his people Iſrael. And prepare your ſelves by the houſes of your Fathers, after your Courſes, according to the writing of David King of Iſrael, and according to the writing of his Son Solomon — So kill the Paſſover and ſanctify your ſelves, and prepare your Brethren, that they may do according to the word of the Lord by the hand of Moſes.* Now hence it's evident, that the Levites *in killing the Paſſover* acted according to *the writings of David, and Solomon*: which writings muſt neceſſarily be one and the ſame, and both of them Received from the Lord. 1. Chron. 28. 19. Where David proteſts: That *the Lord made him underſtand all this, in writing by his hand upon Him*: 2. It's plain alſo that good *Joſiah* aimed at this one thing in all he did, that all might be done *according to the word of the Lord by Moſes*, and then either the Levites muſt be judged to have the ſame power *by the Command of Moſes*, or elſe that *no ſubſequent Diſpoſition* of affairs *otherwiſe* by the Authority of God could be adjudged contrary to what he had *Commanded by Moſes*. 3. It is plain alſo that *Joſiah* had no reſpect to *Hezekiah's* practiſe as the Reaſon of his own, becauſe he quotes not the practiſe of *Hezekiah*, but the *writings of David and Solomon*, ſo falſe it is what the *Enquirer* ſo confidently aſſerts, *that Hezekiah preferred the Levites to aſſiſt the Prieſts in killing the other Sacrifices, which never before they were admitted to.*

And therefore I would be ſatisfied, to what purpoſe *Joſiah* ſhould trouble himſelf, to conform to the patterns of *Moſes*, *David*, *Solomon*, in theſe Circumſtantials, If *by prærogative Royal* He might diſpenſe with, alter, repeal in whole, or in part any of Gods poſitive inſtitutions.

§. 3. Whatever irregularities there might be in this Paſſeover of *Hezekiah*, (and to be ſure there were ſome in ſo great and inveterate a degeneracy) that holy Prince humbly deprecates the juſt diſpleaſure of God, and ſtands not ſawcily to juſtify himſelf, that it was *in his Commiſſion to order Circumſtantials in worſhip.* v. 18. *They did eat the Paſſover otherwiſe then was written.* And *Hezekiah prayed for them.* v. 19. 20. *ſaying, Lord God pardon every one that prepareth his heart to ſeek the God of his Fathers, though he be not cleanſed according to the purification of the ſanctuary, and the Lord hearkned to Hezekiah, and healed the People.* Whence it's undeniable. 1. That if we would take the exact meaſure of *the ſtreſs* which God lays upon an Ordinance, we muſt have no regard to thoſe idle coined diſtinctions, invented in caſe of utmoſt extremity, as men in famine will live (poor ſouls) upon any

any thing, but to *the word of Institution*. They did *otherwise* then *was written*. What *Moses his writing* was, they knew; what *Davids*, what *Solomons writings* were, whereby the Levites were warranted to *Kill*, or *assist* in Killing the Passeover, they also knew, yet somethings there were not warranted by any of these writings, for which there was no *scriptum est*: and [*otherwise*] in an *Institution*, is [*contrary*] *to the Institution*, and for these *Hezekiah* begs pardon. 2. That though the people who had been long hardened under the degeneracy, made no bones of the matter, they might perhaps look upon all these as *Circumstantials, upon which God laid little stress*, (for in times of corruption there are never wanting some ingenious persons who will justify any thing,) yet *Hezekiah* a Prince of an apprehensive spirit and tender conscience, knowing well, that not to keep close to *what was written*, in instituted Worship, might draw down a curse, sooner then procure a blessing, He earnestly cries to God for the pardon of irregularities. He went as near the Archetypes of the institution as the iniquities of the times, and a general prevarication would admit, and for the rest he is importunate with God that his jealousy might not consume them. Wherein our *Enquirer* had he stood by would have sufficiently derided his superstitious folly and fear, that laid so *great a stress*, where God laid *very little*, not understanding the prærogative of his Imperial Crown, in dispensing with these Circumstantials. 3. That this irregularity was so hainous in the eys of God, that some wrath was already broken out from the Lord upon the people. *The plague was begun*. And it was high time for a zealous Prince to *interpose*, not to determine *Circumstantials*, but to *Determine that wrath*, which for these *Neglected Circumstantials* was kindled, which by prayer he attemps, the *only Incense* by which, in his politick capacity, he could *stand between the living, and the dead*.

And thus the Jews say: *Antea qui comederunt oteisi sunt, sed Regis precibus clades cessavit*; They that *first eat of the Passeover in their uncleannesses, were cut of by the immediate hand of God, but by the interposition of* Hezekiah's *prayers the plague stayed*. 4. And we may reasonably hence conclude, that this pious Prince, who was so sensible of *the peoples irregularity* in one kind, would have been as apprehensive of the *Levites deficiency* in another, had their fact contravened the Institution: And as little Reason to doubt, but that the jealousy of God had smoaked and flamed out against *the Levites* as well as *the people* had *they killed*, as tho other *ate* the Passeover *otherwise then was written*. And therefore *Grotius*, who magnifies this as *an illustrious instance of Royal authority to relax a Divine Command in case of necessity*, yet dares not affirm that the King did all this upon his own Head. (least whilst he advanced his Power, he should draw his prudence into Question) but *Consulto (ut credibile est) prius Synedrio*: having *first advised with the Sanedrin about the Legality of the fact*:

When therefore he askes us this Question; *since the Magistrates had once such a power, how came they to lose it?* I confess I cannot tell! I believe they have as much power as ever they enjoyed; and this I am certain of, that never any received such a power from God, as would warrant him to alter any of Gods institutions, to set up a New Religion, a new Office, or institution, without special direction from divine prescription, or immediate Revelation.

(2) We come to his second Argument, which is this: *The New Testament is frequent in asserting the power of Magistrates, and requires all to be subject to them, of what Quality or condition soever.* 13. *Rom.* 1. *Let every soul be subject to the higher powers.* Thus far he has no Enemy, at least he ought to have none. The practise of the primitive Christians, which commented admirably upon that Text of the Apostle, and other clear places, has put all this out of dispute, who were most severe in their obedience, under the most severe persecutions. Thus *Tertullian* in Apolog. Cap. 30. „ Nos pro salute Imperatorum Deum invocamus, — „ Precantes sumus pro omnibus Imperatoribus, vitam illis prolixam, imperium securum, domum tutam, exercitús fortes, „ Senatum fidelem, populum probum, orbem quietum, quæcunque hominis, & Cæsaris vota sunt. *We pray to God for the safety of our Emperour; that God would give them a long life, a peaceable Government, that he would preserve the Royal Family*, that he would *vouchsafe them a faithful Council, a Loyal People, a quiet world, valiant Armies, and whatsoever their own wishes can desire.* Thus *Dionysius* in his Apology for the Christians, in the persecution under *Verus*, „ Nos unum Deum colimus, & venerámur, omnium fabricatorem, huic etiam sine intermissione „ pro eorum regno ut firmum, & stabile Maneat preces adhibemus. *We worship* (says he) *and adore only one God, the Creatour of All things, and to him we powr out our prayers night and day, that the Government of our Emperours may abide firm, and unshaken.* They that would plead, *Christianus sum*, I *cannot conform*, would as sincerely say, *Christianus sum*, I dare *not resist*: There is then no Question but that we are all upon pain of eternal damnation bound to obey the Civil Magistrate, and *all that are sent by him*, in all civil things which are not demonstrably sinful, according to the Municipal Laws, but the Question will meet us again though we avoid it, How farr their power extends in matters of *Immediate worship*, and things directly within the verge of Conscience, wherein possibly I can yeeld as farr as another, though I would proceed upon better grounds then the *Enquirer* has layd down, which now I come to examine.

§. 1. *The New Testament* (says he) *no where excepts the case of Religion.* Answer 1. *No where excepts it?* Ay but where does he *New* or *Old expresse*, and *include* it? I was in hopes that according to his promise, he would have proved that the

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Magiſtrate exceeds not his Commiſſion in determining the things under debate, and he puts us of with this, *They are not excepted* out of his commiſſion: He that Acts *by Commiſſion*, muſt have his powers authorized by his Commiſſion. Suppoſe a Prince ſhould iſſue out a Commiſſion to certain Delegates to hear and Determine all Differences relating to the Forreſt, and they ſhall intermeddle with affaires that are out of the Purlieus, will it be thought enough to ſay, Theſe places are not excluded their Commiſſion. 2. Nor do I except, *the caſe of Religion*, out of the Magiſtrates Commiſſion, but only Humbly enquire, of *the Enquirer*, how farr *the Commiſſion extends in Religious matters*? To this he gives us an Anſwer, *I mean ſo farr as Circumſtantials, and thoſe things which God himſelf hath not defined.* But this will either deſtroy all again, or not mend the matters one jot: for, 1. I no where find that God has excepted *Subſtantials*, more then *Circumſtantials* out of *his Commiſſion*: In what reſpect the one is *included*, the other is ſo: and in what reſpect the one is *excluded*, the other is ſo: that is, both are *included*, for *his preſervation*, and both *excluded*, as to his alteration of, adding to, or ſubtracting from them. If a Commiſſion be produced that the Magiſtrate ſhall guide me in all acceptable external inſtituted Worſhip, excepting the *ſubſtantials* thereof, I have enough; for *exceptio in non exceptis firmat Regulam.* The exception of *ſubſtantials* would more ſtrongly include *the Circumſtantials.* And therefore I am affraid he will not produce a Commiſſion that excepts *ſubſtantials.* Let it be *ſubſtance* or *Circumſtance*: let men invent what Terms or Names they pleaſe, If in the outward exerciſe of Religion Chriſtians ſhall diſturbe the peace, they ſhall know and find that the Magiſtrate has a coercive power that will reach them and all their outward Actions, for the aſſecurating that peace wherewith God has entruſted him. To give Almes is *an Act*, a *ſubſtantial Act* of Religion; yet if any Phariſaical ſpirit ſhall *ſound his Trumpet* to draw a concourſe of people after him, and thus turn *the trumpet of Religion* into *a trumpet of Rebellion*; if he ſhall make *Sacramentum pietatis*, *vinculum iniquitatis.* He, and his Act come within the Magiſtrates Commiſſion; And yet it extends *not to Alter an Act of Religion*, but to *ſuppreſs a Deſign of faction, and ſedition.*

2. Such an exception as he fancies in the Magiſtrates Commiſſion, as it no where appears, ſo would it be purely nugatory, did it appear, unleſs we had withal ſome infallible κριτήριον, to diſcriminate the *Circumſtantials* from the *ſubſtantials*: Otherwiſe either he might encroach upon *the ſubſtantials*, under the Notion of *Circumſtantials*, or a refractary people would be alwayes croſſing and thwarting his *determinations*, under pretence that the *ſubſtantials* were invaded, when he was only modelling and ordering the *Innocent Circumſtantials*: And thus as the ſea

and the land are alwayes eating into each others Liberties, or as in some Nations, where prerogative and propriety are not equally ballanced, the one is beating up the others Quarters perpetually, so would there be an unappeasable warr between these *Substantials*, and *Circumstantials*, which like the Marches between two Kingdoms of no firm correspondence, would be ever subject to the longer and sharper sword: But Christ has not left these concerns at such a loose end.

§. 2. He argues thus: *If they have not power in such matters of Religion as we speak of, it's manifest they have no Magistracy, or legislative power at all in Religion.* I will deal freely with our *Enquirer*: for ought I know to the contrary, they have this power, and a farr greater power *in the Matters of Religion whereof he speaks*, for I do not yet understand *what those Matters of Religion are* whereof *he speaks*? but to answer as well as I can conjecture at his intentions. 1. I know not what a *Legislative power in Religion* means in the hands of any but the *Lord Jesus Christ*. The Scripture has told us, 4. Jam. 12. That *there is one Law-giver who is able to save or to destroy*. He that can eternally *save*, upon *obedience*, or eternally *damn* upon *disobedience*, may securely challenge *a legislative power* over the Church. It's certain from hence, that Christ is the *only Law-giver* to his Church, in *some sense*; and in *what sense* that should be, but that he alone can impose matters of *immediate worship upon the Consciences*, I cannot tell. He that denies Christ to be *the only Legislator*, at *this day*, may with equal Reason deny him to be *the only Judge* in *the Great Day*: and it's not worth the while, for *a few Ceremonies* to loose *out of the Articles of our* Creed: Hetherto a General Council has been thought to have the Highest visible power on earth to make Laws for the Church, and yet the Church of England has Determin'd. Art. 21. *That they may err, and have sometimes erred even in things pertaining to God.* And therefore it will be our safest, and wisest course to leave the Legislative power in matters of Religion in the hands of Christ, where God entrusted it, and where we found it, who can neither deceive, nor be deceived.

2. There may be a *Magistratical power* about Religious matters, where there is *no Legislative* power: The Magistrate may have an *Executive power* to do all that God has *commanded Him*, and see others do all that God has *commanded them*, and yet *no legislative power* to alter, or add to the Institutions of Christ: what a vast Field has every supream Magistrate, wherein he may place out all his zeal, power, and Authority, and yet never touch the *Phylactery*, *or fringe*, of the *Garment of Christ*, either by enlarging or pairing it away. His power is very evident in the Moral Law, bottom'd upon Eternal, and immutable Reasons, and to build it upon such dubious, and precarious Hypotheses, or to overcharge it with unscriptural powers, is but secretly to undermine it, or crush it down with it's own weight.

(3) His third Argument is this: *It's generally acknowledged*

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(*and accordingly practised*) *that Fathers and Governours of Families have Authority in Matters of Religion within their own families, at least so farr as the case in hand.* Nay pray forbear a little: That they have an Authority in matters of Religion, is indeed acknowledged, and I wish it were more practised; All I hesitate at, is, whether he has such a power *as farr as the case in Hand*: The case *in hand* is or should be, whether *the Magistrate has power to determine*, such externals of Religion, as he (to blind the business) thought meet to call *Circumstantials*: and such a power, as Dissenters acknowledge not, so they practise not: It were very hard if a Master of a Family should arrogate to himself such a power as to enjoyn his Wife, Children, Servants, Relations, Strangers, to have a Fugil of salt layd upon their Tongues, in token that *they shall not be ashamed to have their speech seasoned with savoury discourse*, without submission to which Crotchet they shall either not be admitted into the family, or if already admitted, cast out of doors, or however not permitted to hear a Chapter read, or joyn in prayer all their days; This would have been a little more to the case, of which our *Enquirers* instances come exceeding short.

Who doubts (says he) *but the Father, or Head of a Family may prescribe what Chapters shall be read? what Prayers used? what times shall be set apart for Devotion? what postures, whether kneeling, standing, or being uncovered? who shall officiate in his Family? with innumerable others of a like Nature*: And if they be but *of the like Nature*, they will never do us any harm. Let's look'em over however!

1. *What Chapters may be read*: Why truly if the Question be only *which of the two or more, of equal Authority*, He may be as fit as another: but if the Competition were between *two*, the *one out of Scripture*, the other out of *some Legendary Fable*, that has stuft a Farce with Romanticks, I Question much his power to Determine, for God has at least Determined thus farr, that in all our Worship of him, we speak and read nothing but the Truth; and he that teaches his Family, ought to teach from, or according to *the Oracles of God*:

2. *What Prayers used*. God will not accept *a female* from him that has *a Male* in his Flock; As the Prince will not accept *such a present*, much less will *the great God*, who gives what he receives, and therefore may justly expect the best. No Master of a Family has Authority to offer prayers to God *less good*, if God have furnish't him *with better*.

3. *What times shall be set apart for Devotion*: The setting apart of *Common time* for Family-Worship, is *a meer Circumstance*, which neither renders the Worship more or less acceptable to God *as it is time*. And it is disjunctively commanded by Him, who has commanded Masters of Families to *continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving*. 4. Col. 1, 2. If God has commanded *Worship*, he has also therewith commanded *some time*, wherein to Worship: A time must therefore necessarily be resol-

ved on, but by his good favour this is not *to the case in hand*. And yet as large as the Masters power may be in this matter, he must have regard to the General rules of the Gospel: that *All things be done for edification*, to advance the success of the Duty. He may neither determine upon a Revolution too *infrequent*, nor upon a continuance *too short*, to slubber, and huddle over the Ordinance in formal hast; nor upon an *unseasonable hour*, when his overworked, and overwatched servants are ready to drop asleep, when tyred Nature is ready to over-Master the souls gracious propensities towards Gods service. And where he seems to have *most power*, he has farr short of an *Absolute power*.

4. *For postures whether kneeling, standing, or being uncovered.* I never so much admired the difference between prædicamental *situs*, & *habitus*, as to move a quarrel, whether *being uncovered* was *a posture* or no? yet I think these things are not capable of an *universal, fixed, unalterable Law*. If one of *these postures* shall render any one in the Family *uncapable of pursuing, and reaching the ends of an Ordinance*; That Parent shall sin against God; who rigidly exacts the most plausible posture, or gesture; and I suppose he has *no Commission from God to sin against him*: If standing shall so disease a weak child, that being in pain he cannot attend the present service; If kneeling, shall ordinarily expose another to drowzines; If *being uncover'd*, shall prejudice health, and endanger life; If any of these or any other, shall distract the mind, make the duty a Burden, wear out the Body, Masters of Families must know, that their power is *for edification, and not destruction*, and God *will have Mercy, and not Sacrifice*, whatsoever an Imperious Master will have. He that shall teach that Magistrates may dispense with *the Circumstantials of Gods worship*, will sure never be so hardy, as to teach, that Masters of Families, and Magistrates too, ought not to dispense with their own institutions.

5. *In what Habit*: No Master of a Family has power to enjoyn any Religious Habits, appropriated to divine service: In the General 'tis true, Habit is necessary, upon many accounts, for health, decency: But *Religious Habits* are not so, not put into the Charter of Domestick Power, nor indeed capable of a Canon.

5. *Who shall Officiate in a Family*: The duty of Officiating in the Family, is primarily incumbent upon himself; I know no Reason he should claim the Authority, who waves the duty: If he will have the honour, let him discharge the work of a Master of a Family, nor may he Command his Child to pray that cannot pray, with that usefulness to edification to the whole: If any person whose greater Abilities may manage the Service more to the glory of God be present, his charitable prudence will instruct him to procure such

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assistance as may best promove the spiritual concerns of those under his charge.

To shut up this point. The powers here ascribed to a Master of a Family, are such as do *not reach the case in hand*: Determination of Chapters, Prayers, Times, Postures, Gestures, Persons, which were not before determined by the divine power, will not make up *one Mystical Ceremony*; and the Magistrate may have all this power, and yet none such as will reach *the case in hand*; That power which will serve to make *a Primitive Directory*, will not serve to impose *a Modern Liturgy*; All that can possibly be screwed out of these instances of *Paternal Authority* is no more then this, that he may Determine between two or more *Circumstances*, one of which is *disjunctively necessary* to the performance of *a necessary duty*: but it will be hard when he comes to try it, to infer a power to impose mystical Ceremonies, which are no ways necessary to the performance of any duty, no not by Disjunction.

I presume I have saved my Bail, if I should give no further answer, yet for his greater satisfaction I shall trouble the Reader with these few Considerables.

§. 1. That the Governour of a Family, being upon the place, and having all present Circumstances within his prospect, may more usefully determine upon all determinable Circumstances, then a Magistrate for a whole Nation, and the several Congregations therein, whose Accidents are so various that they cannot possibly come under any uniform Determination: suppose a strict Law were made at Paris, that every particular Church in the Nation should commence their publick service on the Lords day precisely at nine a clock, it is Mathematically certain, that some would have done and got half through *their dinners*, before others would be half way in *their Devotions*; They in furtheſt Eastern Parts would have come to their *Amen*, before those on the Calabrian Ocean would be at their *Oremus*, because of the diversities of Meridians, and Longitudes, and yet all would be but nine a clock.

§. 2. That the consequence from the Power of a *Master of a Family*, to *the Civil Magistrates power*, is not very clear: for the Master of a Family is supposed to have *Minors* in his Family, who cannot be safely trusted with the Determination of those Circumstances, which must necessarily be determined, but it would be a reproach to the Christian Religion, that all the Bishops, Pastors, and Churches in a Nation could not find wit enough to determine, what time of the day were most expedient to Assemble in. The power of a Prince is farr more Noble, then that of the Family Governour, and yet by Reason of the *incapacity*, *and unfitness of the matter*, *the bulkiness of the Aggregate*; the lesser power may possibly Determine upon some small

Circumstances which the greater power is unfit to do: To be Captain of *a Man of Warr* is more honourable, then to Command a Skuller; and yet this latter will tack about more nimbly, then that cumbersome Argosie, because the Vessel is more Manageable.

§. 3. This *uniformity* which is so much driven at in all these arguments, as the great Reason of the Necessity of *universal* Determination, is a name much bandied in speculative discourses, rather then a thing practicable; if we may judge that *not facible*, which never yet was attained. Let us look a little nearer home! And first we find no Punctual uniformity between the two Provinces: He that can sing Divine Service in the Province of York, may without new instruction be utterly to seek in the Psalmodie of *Canterbury*; look upon the same Province, and compare the *Parochial*, with the *Cathedral* service, and there's less uniformity still. He that can fadge pretty well at a Country-Church, is quite lost in the uncouth usages of the Minister: Look into the Parochials, and some have their Conformity, superconformity, statute Ceremonies, and Canon Ceremonies, so that you would hardly judge them to be half-sisters: take a step nearer, and look in the same Parish-Church, uniformity is not to be found there; the Minister is not conformable to himself. At one prayer *he stands*, at another he *kneels*, at one part of the publick Service he is *all white*, and then that Colour is most decent, by and by *all Black*, and then *that is most decent*; nor is there any uniformity between the Minister, and the people; He, at the *Delivery* of the consecrated Elements, *praying* in a posture of *standing*, and they in *the Act of Receiving*, who *pray not*, yet confined to *Genuflation*. Nor is there less discrepancy between the several *parts of worship*; for whereas the grand Plea for Ceremonies is a certain *Decency*, which they conciliate to the service, and their great usefulness to stirr up the dull minds of men, yet *only Baptism* is adorned with *the sign of the Cross*, and the rest left naked of so great an ornament, and yet the Apostles Rule is, let *all things* be done *decently*; and we have as much need to have our dull minds quickned in *the other Sacrament*, and all other parts of worship.

§. 4. Lastly. That power which belongs to the supream Civil Magistrate, *as such* belongs *to all and every supream Magistrate*; but this power of instituting, imposing Ceremonies belongs not to every supream Magistrate, therefore it belongs not to the supream Civil Magistrate as such, that is, it belongs to none.

The Reason of the Major Proposition is taken from that Common Axiome. *A quatenus, ad omne valet consequentia:* The proof of the *Minor* is this: That which belonged not to the supream Civil Magistrate for three hundred yeaps after Christs time, belongs not to all Civil Magistrates; but this power of instituting, and imposing Ceremonies belonged not to the Civil Magistrate for three hundred years after Christs time, therefo

therefore it belonged not to all. To enervate which Argument it muſt either be denyed that the Roman Emperours during that Period were ſupream Civil Magiſtrates, which St. Paul oppoſes, charging the Churches to obey them; or aſſerted that they had a power to determine of the Circumſtantials of the Chriſtian Religion, and preſcribe what Ceremonies they ſaw good in the Evangelical worſhip.

[2] We now come to his ſecond Theſis. *If the Magiſtrate may Determine theſe Matters; then not only Chriſtian Charity, and humility, but Common Prudence requires us to preſume of the wiſdom, and reaſonableneſs of his determinations, and much more to obey them.*

I ſhall ſay little, but perhaps ſmile the more at the prettineſs of the *conſequent*. It's our duty to preſume of the reaſonableneſs, but *much more to obey* thoſe Determinations; that is, it's *much more our duty to obey*. then *to be Rational*.

That we are to preſume very highly of the wiſdom of our Superiours acting within their proper Sphære, we readily admit: For when God calls them to a work, he will beſtow competent wiſdom for the diſcharge of it: but yet am I not to preſume ſo unmeaſurably of any ones wiſdom, as to reſign up my Faith and Conſcience, with the diſpoſal of Gods worſhip without more a do to it. If God had given him Authority to determine theſe matters, I ſhould not have been concern'd to Queſtion his wiſdom: Gods Command had ſuperſeded my little ſcruples, and though he had miſcarried in his prudential Deciſion, I ſhould have received the praiſe of ſubjection, but till ſuch Authority do appear, I ſhall ſet down *on this ſide ſuch preſumption*, though ſomewhat *beyond deſpair*.

If the Reader has any pitty left, he may do charitably to beſtow a little of it upon me, that muſt be obliged to anſwer all the *Sentences* and *Apothegms* in *wits-commonwealth*, and yet to this drudgery I ſhall patiently ſubmit till I am quite tyred, and then Reſign this Province:

(1) *It's enough* (ſays he) *to warrant, and require our obedience, that the thing is the Command of our Superiour, and not beyond the Sphære of his Authority.*

That Religion is within *the Magiſtrates Sphære*, I have freely owned, but not to all intents, and purpoſes; not to *ſtock up* what God has *planted*, not *to plant* what God has *ſtockt up*. Subſtantials, and Circumſtantials are all within his Sphære, but not to do what he pleaſed withal.

As *all Perſons*, *with their Civil concerns* are within the *Magiſtrates Sphære*, their *lives*, *Liberties*, *and eſtates* all come *under his cognizance*, and yet there are ſome great Lawyers, and Loyal ſubjects, who think they are *not within his Sphære* to diſpoſe of them at pleaſure; ſo are all the concerns of Religion within his Sphære too, to preſerve, not to deſtroy; to propagate, not to alter; to encourage, not to innovate in the worſhip of God: for *All power is for edification, not deſtruction*;

Every Christian has Religion within his sphære, that is, he has a concern in it, but no concern over, and above it; *Tota Religio*, but not *Totum Religionis*, as *Totus Homo*, yet not *Totum Hominis* are within the reach of Magistracy: He has a power to *secure Religion*; Religion is therefore *within his sphære*; but he has none to make *new Religion*, or *a new part* of Religion, that therefore is out of his sphære, nor will it excuse me to God, his word and my own conscience blindly to obey in every thing, some whereof may be out of his sphære, because he has a power to command somethings which are within his sphære.

The true Ancient Protestants of this Church with no less zeal then success defended the Princes Power, and supremacy against all the claims of Rome, and yet never ascribed such a power to him as might shackle Conscience, and dispose of Religion at pleasure. I shall give the Reader a taste from the learned Bishop Bilson, who dedicates his book to Q: Eliz: and it came abroad *cum Privilegio*. Dial: p. 533 534. 535. &c. The Discourse is between a Papist, and a Protestant.

Philander. *If the Queen establish any Religion, you are bound by your oath to obey it whatsoever it be.* Theophilus. We must not rebel, nor take Armes against the Prince (as you affirm you may) but with reverence, and humility serve God before the Prince: Phil. *Then is not the Prince supream.* Theo. Why so? Phil. *Your selves are Superiour, you will serve whom you list.* Theo. As though to serve God according to his will, were to serve whom we list, and not whom all Princes, and others ought to serve. Phil. *But you will be Judges, when God is well served, and when not*: Theo. If you can excuse us before God, when you mislead us, we will serve whom you appoint us: otherwise if every Man shall answer for himself, good Reason he be Master of his own Conscience in that which toucheth him so neer, and no man can excuse him for. Phil. *This is to make every private man supream Judge of Religion.* Theo. The poorest wretch that is may be supream Governour of his own heart: Princes rule the Publick, and external actions of their Countries, but not the Consciences of men. Phil. *Would you have such Confusion suffered in the Church, that every Man should follow what he list?* Theo. I would not have such presumption, and wickedness brought into the Church, that Christ and his Word should be subjected to the wills, or voices of Mortal men: For though the whole World should pronounce against him, or it, God will be true, and all men shall be lyars. Phil. *No more would we.* Theo Why then restrain you Truth, to the Assemblies, and sentences of Popes, and Prælates, as though they must be gently entreated, and fairly offer'd by Christ, before he might attempt, or expect to recover his own. Phil. *We would have things done orderly.* Theo. Call you that Order, where Christ shall stand without doors, till your Clergy shall consent to bring him in? Phil. *God is not the Author of Confusion, but of Peace.* Theo. It's no Confusion, for one Family,

mily, yea for one Man, to serve God, though all the Families, and men of the same Realm will not. *Joshua* said to the people: *If it seem evil to you to serve the Lord, chuse you whom you will serve, but I, and my house will serve the Lord.* *Elias* was left alone, for any that he saw willing to serve God in Israel, and yet abated not his Zeal: *Micheas* alone opposed himself against 400. Prophets; with what judicial Authority can you tell? *Amos* neither spared *Jeroboam* the King, nor *Amaziah* the Priest, and yet he was but a simple Heards-man, and not so much as the Son of a Prophet. *John Baptist* had no Competent Jurisdiction over the Scribes, and Pharisees that *sat in Moses his chair*, and yet he condemned them for *a Generation of Vipers*. The Counsels, where *Peter*, *Stephen*, *Paul*, were convened, accused, and punisht, lacked none of your Judicial formalities, and yet the Apostles stoutly both resisted, and condemned their *Deliberative, and Definitive sentences*. Phil. *The Apostles Commission we know, but yours we know not.* Theo. You cannot be Ignorant of ours, if you know theirs; so long as we preach the same Doctrine, that they did, we have the same power, and Authority, which they had keep your Competent Jurisdictions, Judicial Cognitions, and Legal Decisions to your self: The Son of God first founded, and still gathereth his Church by the mouths of his Preachers, not by the summons of Consistories: He that is sent to preach, may not hold his tongue, and tarry, till *my Lord the Pope, and his Mitred Fathers* can intend to meet, and list to consent to the ruine (as they think) of their Dignities, and Liberties. Phil. *Despise you Counsels?* Theo. By no means; so long as they be Counsels, that is sober, and free Conferences of Godly and learned Teachers; but if they wax wanton, against Christ, and will not have the Truth received, until they have consented, we reject them as Conspiracies of the wicked, which no Christian ought to Reverence — But will you suffer God to make Laws for his Church? Phil. *What else?* Theo. And may not every private Man embrace those Laws which God hath made, whosoever say nay? Phil. *He must.* Theo. What if some Bishops will not agree they shall? must the Prince, and people cease to serve God; till the Clergy be better minded. Phil. *In matters of Faith the Prince and lay-Lords have no voices.* Theo. In making Laws they had. Phil. *True! But Laws for Religion they might not prescribe.* Theo. No more might Bishops! It's only Gods Office to appoint how he will be served. Phil. *Gods will must be learned at the Mouths of the Bishops.* Theo. They must Teach; leaving always the Liberty to the Prince, and people, to examine their Doctrine, and avoid their errour, and if they teach not Truth, the Prince and people may expel them.

I shall now leave it to the Determination of the Impartial, and unprejudiced Reader, whether he that was then the *Protestant*, would not now be the *Fanatick*; and whether he that makes our *Enquirers* Objections, would not have passed

for

for a Catholick of the Roman edition in thoſe days?

(2) *Humility* (ſays he) *requiring that we think meanly and modeſtly of our own Reaſons, Charity that we judge favourably of anothers, and Prudence that we think beſt of the Magiſtrates, all theſe together make it our duty not only to obey, but to do it with all chearfulneſs imaginable.* Anſ. 1. No humility teaches me in the matters of eternal ſalvation, to put out my own eyes to ſee with anothers ſpectacles: my Neighbours eyes may be clearer, and ſtronger then mine, yet mine are mine own; He that has better eyes then I, has this happineſs, that he may direct *himſelf better*, but yet he would direct *me worſe*, without the uſe of my own: A Chriſtians *own Reaſon*, informed from Gods Word, is the immediate guide of His ſteps in all acceptable obedience to, and walking with God. *Blind obedience* in this caſe is *no obedience*: Humility teaches me to think my ſelf *a Man*, and therefore *may err*; but not *a Brute*, which *cannot but err*: It neither teaches me to Revere any Creature *as my God*, nor to deſpiſe my *own Intellectuals*, as if I were *a beaſt*. 2. Though Charity Command me to judge favourably of anothers *ſpiritual eſtate for the preſent*, his *eternal ſtate for the future*, yet it Commands me not to neglect making proviſion for *my own*: It Commands me to love another *as my ſelf*, and therefore nor *above my ſelf*; I cannot expect another ſhould be *true*, if I *prove falſe* to my own ſoul. It's *a blind charity*, and only *fit for the Hoſpital*, that would make me of every mans Religion, of whom it teaches me *to judge favourably*: for at this rate I muſt be of twenty Religions, and perhaps one half of them together by the ears with the other half: Charity will heal *the evil eye, and make it good*, but *not put it out*. 3. Charity teaches me to think beſt of the Magiſtrates Reaſon *in Common Kingdoms*, but better of *Scripture Reaſon* in the *territory's of Conſcience*. And prudence will dictate to me, that God who has placed him in his Political Orbe, will provide an Intelligence to move that Sphære regularly, for *Deus ſupremus, nihil adnes*, but no Prudence will teach me to eſpouſe a Religion becauſe 'tis his, but becauſe it approves it ſelf to *the Teſt, and touch-ſtone* of all Religion, *the word of God*.

I could learn better Divinity from an honeſt Heathen then this ſtuff: Pliny has given us this Rule: *Cautiſſimi cujuſque præceptum, Quod dubitas ne feceris.* And Tully: Quocirca benè præcipiunt qui vetant quicquam agere, quod dubites æquum ſit an iniquum: *They preach true Doctrine who warn you not to do any thing, whereof you doubt whether it be good or evil.* And though ſuch a prudence as he has deſcribed may contingently do me *no great hurt at home*, yet it will make me *a Papiſt in Italy, a Muſſulman at the Port, a Heathen in China*, or rather *every where juſt Nothing*.

(3) *It's a Common miſtake to think Charity, and Compaſſion only due from Governours to their inferiours in the frame and compoſure of their Laws, for it's due alſo from inferiours towards them, and that they make a fair, and candid conſtruction of their injunctions.*

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The duty is reciprocal without doubt, but with great difference: we pity, and pray for our Superiours under their burdens of Government, and expect only pity from them under our loads of subjection; And though we account *subjection* no servile yoke, yet 'tis a yoke; as Bernard in another case, *Dulce quidem conjugium est jugum, sed tamen jugum*; And yet a compassionate tenderness towards inferiours in those things wherein God has tyed up Conscience, is an abundant recompense for all that subjection: we would willingly part with all that is *properly our own*, to secure that which is *properly Gods*; And though Magistrates are strictly *above our pitty, and compassion*, yet we hope we are not *below theirs*: If they call for our pitty in any case, 'tis to see them tormented with the importunate sollicitations of one part of their subjects to destroy the other: As it must needs be an unspeakable affliction to a Father to be harrassed by some of his Children to Abnegate and disinherit the rest. As 'tis a great injury to the Son to endeavour to monopolize his beams; to the Fountain, to impropiate it's streams, when the one would shine indifferently, the other flow impartially towards all, so is it a great Trouble to a generous Prince to have his favours intercepted, his Royal grace under sequestration, that he cannot equally influence *the whole Body*, of which *the grace of God* has made him *Head*.

Nor do we dare to judge *our Superiours*, but *our selves*: Not their *intentions*, but our own *Actions*: which if we may not do, better it were to be devested of these cumbersom Reasons of ours, which therefore serve to *encrease our misery*, because they teach us what it is *to be Happy*.

To make a candid interpretation of their Actions, we own our Duty, and as we suppose they steer by the light of their own judgments, so we hope they will indulge us to Act by ours: If we mistake, we wrong our selves, if our mistakes should wrong them, we submit to correction: If they mistake, we must wait under the inconveniences of the effects of that mistake, till the Father of Lights shall inspire other Counsels; only let us Remember, that it is the Princes Glory to be *Rex Hominum, non Asinorum, nec Angelorum*.

(4) *The Scriptures* (says he) *call the Magistrates Masters of Restraint.* 18. Judg. 17. And it's amongst their most glorious Titles, the least of which (if any may be called little) we Revere; And it will be their immortal honour to *restrain* wicked men from *doing evil*, if they cannot restrain them from *being evil*: It was a flower in Jobs Coronet, 29. Ch. 17. 2. That he *brake the jawes of the wicked, and pluckt the spoile out of his Teeth, Masters of Restraint* they are, not to restrain *Religion*, but *irreligion*, and the insatiable thirst of those which nothing will Quench but the blood of their Brethren, or that which was earned with the sweat of their faces.

(5) *Nor will it be a foolish charity, or blind obedience to permit our selves to the Guidance of our Superiours in those little things we*

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speak of: To permit and resign up our selves to the conduct of others in Religious matters absolutely is *blind obedience*, whether *a sober Enquirer* will call them *little* or no. Though the things may be *small*, the *blindness of our obedience* may be as *great* as if the things were *greater*; *Blindness* consists not in the *Object*; but in the *Faculty*, but. 1. The things we discourse of, (if we discourse *ad idem*) are *no little*, but the *great things* of the Gospel: Great I say, if we either consider the greatness and danger of those *Principles* which they proceed upon, or the greatness, and dangerousness of those *Consequences* which they draw along with them, *a little spark* may kindle if neglected a *great flame*; They suppose either that Christ had not *all power committed to him in heaven, and in earth* or that he has given it away by some Dormant warrant, and clandestine Commission, or that he never exercised his Power to settle the Regiment of his Church, or that his Edicts may be Rescinded, and cassated by humane will. And they draw along with them a train of Fatal consequences, as that 'tis possible the condition of Christs Church may be irremediably more servile then ever was that of the Jewish, if Religion should fall into bad mens hands. But no sin is little to him, that knows what blood it cost to expiate it, what *sorrow* it costs the true penitent to mourn for it, and what pains it cost the true Christian to resist it. 2. If the things be *so little* in the judgment of Imposers, we hope we shall tast of their compassion in indulging *such little things*; It shall be no *little praise* we should return to the *great God*, no little returns of duty, and exemplary obedience we should make to his Vicegerent, that should permit us the indifferent use of indifferent things, and suppose them so, yet *the faith of indifferent things is no indifferent thing*: But I observe, That when our Enquirer would have Dissenters *punisht* for the Neglect of *these things*, then they are *not little*; then they become *the greatest*, *weightiest*, most *important things* in the world; then Churches, Government, Religion cannot subsist without them, as accidents cannot subsist without their substances. so neither substances exist without their accidents; but when he comes to drole us into compliance, then they are little triffles, the minutes, punctilios, of Religion. 3. If to resign up our selves in matters of immediate worship without a warrant from God, to any but God, be not *blind obedience*, 'tis because we are blind, and cannot see what blind obedience is: We freely commit our selves to the Political conduct in all things temporal; a ministerial Conduct we own in our Pastors, and Teahers; a Soveraign Conduct we would gladly reserve for Christ. We would willingly go any whether but *to Hell*, do any thing but *sin*, lose any thing but *the peace of our Consciences*, and part with any thing, but what is *none of ours to dispose* of, rather then seem to tergiversate from the Commands of our Governours.

And as we confess *the Magistrate stands upon higher grounds then we*; so we *must*, and without displeasing our Superiours *may say*; That Christ stands upon *higher ground then he*;

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And when we shall come to stand before his Tribunal, there to receive according to our works, we shall all stand upon even ground, as to any difference, that external advantages in this present world, shall then make.

(6) *We have Reason to perswade our selves that we may as easily lye under prejudices, as they; and that we may be as much transported with Considerations of ease, and liberty, as they may probably be suspected to be with Ambition.* Ans: It's the duty of all to watch against those temptations, to which we lye most open from without; and to watch over those corruptions, to which we are most obnoxious from within: we dare not think it *probable that our Magistrates are transported with Ambition*; And we profess that we are not transported with any base lust, or pittiful considerations to suspend active obedience, till we discover such transport by its proper fruits. But if we must still be represented by our sometimes Brethren, but now Persecutors, as misguided by prejudices, we are sorry for it, but cannot help it: and must place these secret Aspersions in the number of those burdens, which by frequent use grow familiar, and less pinching, and such as seeing they are not to be avoided, wisdom dictates they ought to be contemned. And yet we shall pray that our Magistrates, like the highest Boughs of the goodliest trees being most fruitful, may bow down themselves with abundance of precious fruits, and drop some of it into the laps of their despised, but loyal subjects.

(7) *There are no less different capacities of mind, then Constitutions of Body, and as great difference in mens outward Circumstances, as in either of the former*: The Magistrate will certainly thence judge that there ought to be as great a diversity and latitude in his Impositions: He that has a larger swallow, let him have a larger cann: Let the best stomack have the largest trencher: and since one stomack will bear, what would oppress another, why should one mans Conscience be compelled to digest, what anothers can easily put over: Either we must *practise*, whilst we *think not* the *same things*, which is a sordid piece of *unworthy Hypocrisy*, and no credit to uniformity to congregate such Heterogeneous materials; or else tormented, because our Constitutions, capacities, consciences, circumstances are not of one size, which is not our fault, for we had not the mingling of our temperatures, nor the putting together of our frames; or else (which we hope they who are wiser then us all will judge most eligible) that every one retaining his different sentiments which impede not Christianity, or disturb the peace, may be indulged in a practise peaceably managed, suitable to those innocent variations. And since our *Enquirer* has quoted an old story, I shall only repeat his words, and leave the Reader to his own thoughs for the application: *Those that would have the Laws fitted to their humour, without respect to other Men, do but imitate the Barbarous Customs of the Infamous Procrustes, who is said to have either Rackt all those Persons that fell into his hands, and stretcht them out to his own size, if they were too short; or cut them of to his*

own

own proportions, if they were too long. And really if any of the Dissenters be of that Imperious and Tyrannical temper, I know not why they should expect that Mercy they will not show, or institute themselves in those Priviledges, out of which they would eject all others.

I have heard that the famous *B. Andrews*, Disputing with the great Cardinal *Peronne* about these Matters, urged very smartly, *That Man ought not to Add to Gods word, lest he loose his part in the book of life.* The Politick Cardinal askes, *why then do you retain the Cross in Baptism?* The Bishop answered: *Because Authority enjoyns it.* And *for the same Reason* (replyed the Cardinal) *we retain all the rest of the Ceremonies*: what Rejoynder the Bishop made, I do not remember.

It's the great duty, and will be the unspeakable comfort of all in Authority to preserve the whole worship of Christ pure and undefiled, and all the Worshippers of Christ in peace, and security, and when they have done this, they seem to me to have discharged their Commission, and may sue out their *Quietus est*, and easily receive, That *huge, well done, good and faithful servant, Thou hast been faithful in a few things, I will make thee Ruler over many things, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.* As for them who fear a Prince, will have nothing to do, since *Necessaries* are already *Determined, unlawful things, prohibited.* if he may not *Determine the Rest*: They are worse feared then hurt; God has cut him out work enough *in his precept*, and many times (for the sins of a people) cuts them out harder work *by his providence*, and he is little beholden to those *Over-officious Meddlers*, who prompt him to grasp more employment, whilst any lyes upon his hands. The Christian Religion was perfect, and absolute at all points, as it came out of Christs Hands, and if we make it *no worse* when 'tis in ours, he will never complain, though we never make it *better*:

Alcibiades brings in the *Athenians* Complaining to the Oracle of *Jupiter Ammon*, that *their enemies the Lacedemonians prevailed against them; and yet* (say they) *we offer many, and costly Sacrifices*, when *they* present the Gods with *few cheaps, or none.* The Oracle answers (and it might have become a better mouth) That the εὐφημία, *The plain simple service of the Lacedemonians was more acceptable to the Gods, then all the splendid, pompous willworship of the Athenians.*

As the great God is exceedingly jealous in this particular, so has he not left himself without a witness in the Consciences of those who had no other Notices of Gods nature but what came in by the light of nature, or some refracted beams of Revelation conveyed to them by Tradition. The Pythagoreans taught this Doctrine, that *the Gods were to be worshipt,* ἀπὸ μέτρου εὐφημίας, *according to their own good pleasure*: And it was one of the *Platonical* dictates. *That all Divine Worship must be* θεοφιλὴς, *measured by the Acceptation, and appointment* of God.

The Conference which *Numa Pompilius*, the great Roman Ri-

Ritualist had, or pretended to have with the Goddess *Vesta*, instructs us, that he confided little in his *regal power*, without a divine *Placet* to conciliate a due Reverence to those Ceremonies, which having in them no moral goodness, depended wholy upon a positive institution, and that no Artifice will ever preserve a Religious Rite, sacred and intemerate, which is not stamped with a *jus Divinum*.

If indeed an Old fragment, a trivial sentence, or shred out of an heathen Author, were to be the Canon of our Faith, or the Rubric of our worship, I could easily comply with this *Enquirer*, who brings (and 'tis as fair a proof as any he brings) a saying of Æmilius Paulus to his Souldiers. Vos Gladios acute! *What you your swords, and be ready to execute what shall be commanded you, but leave the Management of affairs to your General.* If Christians do really owe that subjection in Religious matters to their Superiours, which Private Soldiers owe *their General* in the field, this *Controversy is at an end*, and with it *all instituted Religion in the world*, that deserves that excellent Name. It may easily be applied: Provide you *knees to bow*, and *backs to bear*, *mouths to say what shall be put into them*, *Hands to subscribe what shall be tendered to you*, *and leave the Truth of Principles, the composure of a worship, the guidance of Consciences to wiser heads.* And he might have quoted us Cæsars Commentaries to as much purpose, where that great Commander upon the reluctancy of his Souldiers to engage, sharpely chides them, *quod aut quam in partem, aut quo Consilio ducerentur, sibi quærendum aut cogitandum putarent: Who durst once surmise, or enquire, either whether, or upon what design they were drawn out.* And thus at last we shall be sped both of *a Directory for worship*, and a *Canon of Church-government*; and may with the *Traditores* of old deliver up *our Bibles* for wast paper: unless we had rather imitate the famous *Legio fulminatrix*, who knew how *to whet their swords against the Common Enemy* at the Command of the *Emperour*, and yet to refuse *a Religious Ceremony*, vouched by *no other* then *humane Authority*.

His fine sentence out of Cato is also hugely wide in this case, *Nulla lex satis omnibus commoda, id modò quæritur, si majori, Parti, & in summam prodest. No Law fits equally easy upon all mens shoulders, the only consideration is, whether it suit with the Generality, and be useful in the main.* 'Tis very true Law-makers cannot apportion out their Civil Constitutions to *an Ounce or a Drachm*; but *one scruple* of Conscience weighs heavier then *a Pound* of *temporal inconveniences*. If it be true, that because in the *laying of an Impost, Custom, or Excise*, the *Minor part* of the *civil Suffragans* must yeeld to the *Major*, that therefore a Religion too must be chosen *by the Poll*, and God compelled to accept of that, or Nothing, which the *Majority of votes* shall allot him. *Religion shall* be sure in most parts of the world to be out-voted by *Atheism*; *Truth* run down by *Errour*, *Holiness* proscribed by *impiety*: As *Socrates* in his time was a *Fanatick*, *Atheism*

ausius in his an *Heretick*, and *Christ himself* amongst the high-trotting Scribes and Pharisees *a Deceiver*: with such maximes as these has *Christianity* been prostituted to *will and pleasure*: „ Regi aut civitati imperium habenti nihil injustum quod utile: *To a Prince, or Commonwealth vested with soveraign Power, nothing can be unjust, that is profitable.* „ In summâ fortunâ, id æquius, quod validius; *In the highest estate, that is ever most just, that has obtained the upperhand.* And the *Enquirer* has approved himself a person qualified with *Carneades* his Excellencies, „ Qui „ pro falso, non minus quam pro vero, vires eloquentiæ poterit „ intendere; *One that for time of need can strain his wit, to set a fair Gloss upon a foul matter, and with as little trouble can expose a Truth, as impose an Errour.*

CHAP. VII.

Wherein Christian Liberty consists? The *Enquirers* Reasonings examined, and Dissenters vindicated from that Insinuation, that they pretend by their Christian Charter to be discharged from Obedience to Laws.

IT is a Priviledge that has too much of Absolute Soveraingty in it for *the Opponent*, to impose what state of the Question he pleases upon *the Respondent*: The *Enquirer* has therefore got the poor Non-conformists upon a sure lock, if he can oblige them to maintain, *That Christian liberty discharges them from obedience to Laws.*

There are indeed *some Laws* from whose obligation if Christian Liberty cannot discharge us, it can do *very little*: and there are *other Laws*, from which if Christian Liberty should pretend to give a discharge, it would assume *too much.*

To *Discharge from obedience*, is to Ambiguous a Term to be put into this Question. For. 1. Christian Liberty in some cases does not discharge us *from obedience*, but *prevents the obligation*: It does not *dissolve the Bond*, but prevents the *Binding*; 2. Christian Liberty may discharge from *a Necessity of obedience* (in some cases) which is *the formal Reason* of subjection to a Law, and yet not discharge from *the Lawfulness of doing* that which is *the Material part* of the Law: If a Law be made the Matter whereof is things *purely indifferent* in their Natures, and these things appropriated to *the immediate service of God*, Christian Liberty will not make it *unlawful to do those things*, but it will still main-

maintain it's ground, that it's *Lawful not to do them.*

The Province of this Liberty whereof we now treat lyes between those things which are *neceſſary, and ſinful*; as it is frequently pleaded about the Magiſtrates power, ſince things forbidden cannot Lawfully be done, nor things Commanded, Lawfully omitted (in their proper ſeaſons) the Magiſtrate muſt either have a power in theſe *middle concerns*, or he can have no Legiſlative power at all: The ſame or ſome ſuch thing I would affirm here; whatever is *ſinful* admits of *no Releaſe*, whatever is *a duty* admits of *no indulgence*, and therefore *Chriſtian Liberty* muſt have it's appartment in theſe *Adiaphorous things*, or be quite ſhut out of doors.

Now ſeeing the Magiſtrates power lyes only in thoſe things *ἐν μέσῳ κείμενα*, ſuch as ſtand in a poſture of neutrality, and ſide in neither with good nor evil; and ſeeing alſo that Chriſtian Liberty has for it's Sphære indifferent things, theſe two powers muſt needs ſtrike fire, and their intereſts perpetually claſh, unleſs ſome expedient may be found out to reconcile their ſeeming enterfeering motions.

Indifferent things may fall under a twofold Conſideration, either as they are applied to, or uſed in ordinary affairs of Humane life; or as they are appropriated to divine Worſhip, and preferred to ſerve in Religious affairs: in the former reſpect they come unqueſtionably under the Magiſtrates Cognizance, which our B. Saviour has put beyond the Die of Controverſy by his exemplary practiſe: 17. Math. 24. Where though he might have pleaded a peculiar Priviledge, yet he rather choſe to wave it, and recommend to us a ſingular pattern of due ſubjection: in this caſe then Chriſtian Liberty ought not interpoſe. In the other Conſideration Chriſtian Liberty puts in a claim, and this alſo our Saviour has made indiſputable by his example, who though he would freely ſubmit to a tax of twenty pence, would not yeeld to their Ceremony of *waſhing hands*, though it was not worth a farthing, when Superſtition had lifted it up above it's place.

And yet as ſacred things in their external exerciſe may come under the inſpection of the Civil Powers, in order to the ſecuring of Publick peace, which is directly entruſted with him by the God of order and peace; ſo may things in their own nature *ſecular*, come under the Juriſdiction of *Chriſtian Liberty*, when they ſhall be advanced above their Pedegree, and made either *parts of Worſhip*, or *Conditions* to the enjoyment of Communion therein.

There are two ſorts of Perſons who as they are enemies to all Truth, ſo they are but back-friends to *Chriſtian Liberty*; ſome there are who have made it ſuch an Idol, that they have ſacrificed things ſacred and civil to it's Deity: and given it ſuch a boundleſs Dominion,

as

as if like Quicksilver it were neither to be contained, *suis aut alienis Terminis*. Against these I shall need to say the less, because every one has a stone to throw at, a cudgel to bestow upon them: Others there are who have Adorned it with a *Hogan Mogan* Title, and yet have cut asunder the senews of it's Authority, and with these it's a *meer Name*, which either with *Echo* evaporates into *aire*, or with *Narcissus* dissolves into water.

But that there is such a Charter our *Enquirer* grants: I suppose he has found it amongst *some ancient Records*, if it be not forfeited for want of *Renewing*, yet that it has some considerable immunities and priviledges, he thus demonstrates.

1. From *the gratitude we owe to him that purchased it*: and therefore we may *conclude* that Christians stand seized of a good and indefeazable estate therein, for it could hardly claim so much gratitude to be *Tenants at the will of Men*;

2. From *the price it cost him*; which was no less then the *precious blood of a Redeemer*; and surely that which could not be purchased with *silver and gold*, should never be sold for the highest offer of *things corruptible*.

3. From that strict injunction. 5 Gal. 1. To *stand fast in the Liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and not to be entangled again with the yoke of bondage*: from whence the Apostle instructs us; 1. That no force can wrest this sacred priviledge out of our hands without our own consent: 'tis our sin if our Charter be lost. 2. That we are prohibited to submit our necks to *any Religious yoke*, as well as that from whence the Disciples were then exempted; for as good have the back broken with *an old burthen* as with *a new one*.

This Christian Liberty being so considerable *in the purchase*, must be also of great usefulness in *the Practise*; which that we may the better understand and improve, I shall modestly give the Reader my thoughts in the ensuing propositions.

(1) Christian liberty consists not in *a meer liberty of judgment*: because. 1. This had been too mean a purchase for *the Blood of Christ*, to procure us that which never was, never could be denied to any Creature that had a judgment. For 2. *The Jews* when under their *most servile burdens*, had ever a liberty to judge the things imposed, to be *indifferent in their own Natures*, antecedent to the positive Law of God 3. Such a liberty the poor Bird in the cage may celebrate, and fancy her self a citizen of the woods, when she's confined within the grates of her little Cloister: such a one the prizoner may flatter himself with; And it reminds me what I observed th'ohter day passing in the streets, this guilded Inscription invited my eye: *Pray Remember the poor Freemen, that are Prizoners in Ludgate*: Poor Freemen indeed (thought I) who have only the freedom to talk how they have served an apprentiship with a Master, and now must serve a double, perhaps a perpetual one, with the Gaoler. 4. Nay this would encrease the bondage, to be always harping upon our liberty *in ostentum*, and yet never tast the sweet of it

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in actu secundo. 5. This would render the Christian Church in a worse plight then that of the Jews, who though they bore *more loss* then we at home who breath in a freer aire, yet had this countervailing advantage, that God himself was *the Imposer*; It is no such bargain to exchange *a Divine* for a *Humane yoke*, though somewhat lighter: and *if it be so*, no thanks to those officious gentlemen, who would gratify Magistrates with a power *over all indifferent things*, and therefore 'tis but contingently that ours is not much more insupportable.

(2) Christian liberty consists in something *Practical*: that which tends to, and chiefly lyes in the using. 5. Gal. 13. *Ye have been called unto Liberty, only use not your Liberty for an occasion to the flesh*: where the Caution that we do not *misuse* it, strongly implies that it must be *used*. And if it lay only in *a freedom of judgment*, the Caution had run; *use it not at all*: All *external use* had been *an abuse* of it.

(3) This liberty must hold *in utramque partem*, that we may *Act* or *not Act*, or determine *this or that way*, or it can be no liberty: And this will be granted by all those, who deny *the will to be free*, unless it have a powerful freedom towards *both the Terms*: but as the self-determination of the will to one side prejudices not it's liberty: so the determination of our Christian liberty (by our choise, guided by Prudence and Reason) is no extinguishment of it's radical freedom. And as external compulsion, and forraign force put upon the will, would be a violation of it's liberty, so all force put upon this Christian liberty, is an annihilation of it.

(4) He that has *enstated* me in this great Priviledge, has also commanded me to *restrain my self in the exercise of it*: and that (1) by *prudence*, when the use of an indifferent thing would prejudice my Neighbours spiritual good, my own salvation, or the glory of God: in these cases I must not plead my Christian liberty *to Act*, but exercise my Christian liberty *to forbear* what would oppose those commanding ends of all Religion. „ Qui faciunt „ quicquid licet, hac citò delabuntur ut faciant quod non licet; *He that will always do all he may, shall easily slide into the doing of what he may not*. The same thing may be usefully done at one time, which would sinfully be done at another: 1. Cor. 6. 12. *All things are Lawful for me, but all things are not expedient*. And „ Omne Quod non expedit, in quantum non expedit, non licet; *Whatever may not be done with expediency, cannot be done Lawfully*. 2. God has commanded me to restrain my self in the exercise of my Christian liberty *by Charity* to my weak Brother: To lay a stumbling block in the way of the weak, or blind, is a gross abuse of my Christian liberty; Because no use of *an indifferent thing* ought to weigh against my Neighbours *spiritual welfare*: And it argues a very light esteem of a soul, when I am too proud to abridge my self in a trifle, rather then hazard his seduction into sin, and exposing to the wrath of God; this Rule the Apostle was under: 1. Cor. 10. 23. *All things are Lawful for*

me, but all things edify not; And when they edify not, Charity commands me to forbear them, in Compassion to my Brothers soul.

(5) Though Christian Liberty may in some cases be *restrained*, yet can it not in any Lawfully be resigned: He that has Commanded me to moderate it by the Rules of *prudence and charity*, has yet Commanded me *to stand fast* in it: He that *resigns* his Liberty *in one case*, by consequence gives it away *in all*; for though he has not actually resigned in every case, yet has he virtually betray'd it, by yeelding in one, for there is the same reason of all the rest; as an owner may forego *the use*, and yet reserve *the right*; which right will reduce *the use* too in season; so may a Christian wave his Liberty *in the use*, still serving *his Right*, that when opportunity shall invite, *the use* may attend, and wait upon *the Right*.

The main violation of Christian Liberty lyes in *a fixed, stated, perpetual compulsion* to do what God has permitted me *to omit*, or in a like *fixed, stated* prohibition *to do* what God has made *Lawful*: For indeed this is that mainly which distinguishes between *the restraint*, and the *infringment of this Liberty*: in the *restraint and moderation* of my Liberty *by prudence, charity*, or whatever other methods God has Commanded, though I suspend my act for a time, yet when those Circumstances which render'd such suspension a duty, go of from their places, I reassume the free exercise of my Liberty; the Stream for a while damm'd up, finds it's old free Channel, and slides along in it's wonted course: but if a Law be made that I shall *never act* what I might Lawfully do; or that I shall always act, or always in such a Revolution, and at such stated Periods, it's then an apparent encroachment upon my Liberty: This the Apostle notably teaches: 1. Cor. 6. 12. *All things are Lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the Power of any*: πάντα ἔξεστί μοι, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐγὼ ἐξουσιασθήσομαι ὑπό τινος. To be brought *under the power of a thing indifferent*: or under the power of any *Person in a thing indifferent*, is that great violation of this Charter. For. 1. Such resignation of my self to be restrained fixedly and statedly, is to subscribe, engage, and make an implicite vow and oath against all opportunities of using my Liberty for the spiritual good of another, which providence may offer to me. Gods Providence by mustring together all due Circumstances, is the great Director when, and where to use, and employ my Christian Liberty: If then such concurring Circumstances should command my forbearance of an Act, to prevent the sin of my Brother, If now I have suffered my self to be determined *the other way*, that I will constantly act, and never forbear; I have tyed my hands behind me from plucking him out of *the snare of sin*, and perhaps *the pit of Hell*. And this is an evil the utmost reach of whose mischievousness I cannot possibly foresee: For God may possibly place me in such a juncture of Circumstances, that I might reasonably hope, might win souls to Christ, and I have manacled my hands, and cannot act, or hung a pad-

lock

lock on my own mouth, and cannot ſpeak; or an advantage may be put into my hands to prevent the ſinful ſcandal of another by my forbearance, and I am not *ſui juris*, but muſt act: 2. By ſuch predetermination of my ſelf in things indifferent. In ſubmiſſion to any man I do as much as in me by alter *the nature of indifferent things*. For things ſinful can *never be done*; Duties muſt *always be performed in due time, and place*, and indifferent things ſhould be *indifferently* uſed, as preſent Circumſtances invite *Prudence, and Charity* to determine: but when once they are predetermined, I can no more do an *indifferent thing*, then if it had been *ſinful*; or no more omit an *indifferent act*, then if it had been *neceſſary*. 3. By ſuch a fixed predetermination of my liberty I aſcribe more to man in his *poſitive precepts*, then to God in his *affirmative moral precepts*: for the Acts of ſuch Commands may be ſuſpended *pro hic, & Nunc*, when they obſtruct ſome great Good, but in this caſe I muſt act uniformly, without reſpect to circumſtances, let thouſands be offended, ſtumbled, wounded in Conſcience, and prejudiced againſt Religion. And in ſhort, by ſuch Reſignation of my liberty in *it's exerciſe*, I have reduced my ſelf to that imaginary *Liberty of Opinion*, that dreaming freedom, which the *Lollards* enjoyed in their Tower, and the poor Proteſtants in *Bonners* Cole-hole.

(7) When Chriſtian *Charity* commands me *to forbear the uſe* of the thing, which otherwiſe is within the Charter of *Chriſtian Liberty to uſe*; and at the ſame time the *Chriſtian Magiſtrate* ſhall command me to *to practiſe that very thing* by a fixed Law; I humbly conceive, that *Chriſtian Charity* ought to *reſtrain my Liberty, not to act*, rather then *the Commands of the Magiſtrate enforce me to act*. 1. Becauſe the reſtraint which Charity puts upon me, will *ſoon determine, and expire*, but the Command of the Magiſtrate is *perpetual*: 2. The reſtraint which Charity puts upon me is *internal*, and ſo agreable to, and conſiſtent with the *greateſt Freedom and Liberty*, but the reſtraint, put upon me by the Magiſtrate, is *external*, and *compulſory*, which comports not with my inward liberty: for if he deals meerly by his *will, and authority*, that ſuits not with my reaſon, and therefore has in it the nature of force; But if the Magiſtrate ſhould deal by Argument, then when a ſtronger appears to act according to his precept, then that drawn from the good of my Neighbour by Charity, Chriſtian Liberty may be free, and yet obey: provided always that that argument be taken from *the nature of the thing commanded*, and not from the *naked commands*. 3. The weak Chriſtian for whoſe ſake Charity commands me to forbear acting, is one that cannot prevent his own weakneſs, his ſtumbling ſcruples, and aptneſs to be wounded; but he that commands me to act, may prevent, recal, or ſuſpend his own Edict in that which in it's own nature is indifferent. And God has commanded me not to offend my weak Brother by the uſe of indifferent

things, but he has no where commanded the Magistrate to impose indifferent things, which become not some way or other necessary. 4. It seems a most horrid thing to interpret Scriptures at this rate: That I should be commanded to *walk Charitably*, till I am commanded to *walk uncharitably*; And forbidden *to destroy him for whom Christ dyed*, by my indifferent things, till I am *enjoyned to destroy him*. *Not to wound weak consciences*, till I am *commanded to wound them*. Thus shall *Moral precepts* be avoyded by humane *positive Laws*, which cannot be superseded by the *Divine positive Laws*. And if one may be thus enervated, the whole *Decalogue* has no firm station; And *thou shalt not make to thy self a graven Image*, may be eluded by this, *till we are commanded by Authority*, and I am somewhat confident the foundation laid by the *Enquirer*, will bear that *superstructure*.

It is therefore a most approbrious, and invidious charge with which he begins this discourse. *All that we have hetherto discoursed about the power of the Magistrate, some think may be avoided by pleading the* Magna Charta *of* Christian Liberty] for though it may be pleaded against some power that may possibly be assumed, yet against none wherewith he stands endowed by the Law of Nature, or Scripture; nor indeed against *any useful power* for the attaining the great ends of Government, publick peace, and tranquillity.

The Church of England in her avowed Doctrine asserts, that *Christ has ordained in his Church two Sacraments, generally necessary to Salvation*; now we conceive, that having a Right *as Christians* to *all the Ordinances of Christ necessary to Salvation*, Christian Liberty may plead the enjoyment of all those Ordinances, upon those naked Terms Christ has offer'd them to Mankind. This is our *Magna Charta*; And if any shall encumber that Communion with new clogs, provisoes, restrictions, and limitations, we plead our *Petition of Right*, which if it be denyed us, our Christian Liberty is so far violated.

Nor do we deny the Magistrate a Power *about our Christian Liberty*; If any shall turn this *Liberty into licentiousness*, he may restrain them: Nay he may restrain *the Liberty it self*, where God has not *ingaged us to restrain it*; And he will eminently employ his power for Christ, when he exerts it, to assert and vindicate to all his loyal Subjects the free use of that great Charter; And if encroaching violence shall make a forcible entry upon that priviledge, whereof we are in quiet, and peaceable possession; we shall complain of the force to him, who will remove it, and reinvest us in our Christian freehold, whereof Christ has made the purchase with his own blood.

Two things there are which the *Enquirer* has lustily promised us, and therefore we may confidently expect from him: first, that he will give us *the true notion*, and secondly, the *due extent* of Christian Liberty: and he has freed his name pretty well, for first he has made it a *meer notion*, and then *layd an extent* upon it, that is, he has seized it into his own hands, upon pretence for the Magistrates use.

[1] And

[1] And first for his *true notion* (for none cry stinking Mackerel) there are two things also very considerable: the liberality of *his Concessions*, and the Policy of *his Retractations*. He makes us fair *large Deeds*, but with *a secret Power of Revocation* frustrates all; so that when we come to cast up our accounts, we must say, with that Bewildred Clyent, *in the Comedian*, when he had advised with his brace of Advocates; *Probè feciſtis, incertior ſum multò quam dudum.*

(1) For his *Concessions* they are truly noble, and generous, and such as would heal us all.

§ 1. Concession. p. 88. *When the Gospel was fully published, then the aforesaid enclosure is laid open, and all Nations invited into the Society of the Church upon equal Terms, neither party being bound to those nice Laws of Moses, nor to any other but those plain, and reasonable ones contained in the Gospel!* This is certainly *the great year of Jubilee!* And will he not deserve to be shut out for ever that shall refuse so free an invitation? Is he a reasonable Creature that refuses the *plain, and reasonable Terms* of Communion, *contained in the Gospel?* what a hideous Monster would a Schismatick be, did Churches keep to these Terms? but his Limitation retracts all this again:

— *And such other* (*not contradictory to them*) *as Publick wisdom, peace, and Charity, shall dictate, and recommend.* Now you have it! Thus the *Crane* most courteously invited the *Fox* to Dinner; but fitted him with such Terms of Communion, that unless he could stretch his neck as long as hers, he shall have his belly full of nothing but hunger; *Esurire licet, gustare non licet!*

It minds me of the Story of *Sanctius* the King of *Arragon's Brother*, who marching against the *Saracens*, diverted himself a while at *Rome*; the Bountiful *Pope*, who is always prodigal of what costs him nothing, causes him to be proclaimed, *Sanctius by the grace of God King of Egypt*, &c. The noyse of Trumpets calls him to the *Balcony*, and he askes what was the matter? He was answered that his *Holiness* had presented him with the Entire Kingdom of *Egypt*: Presently he commands his own Trumpetters to go, and salute the Pope in requital. *Caliph of Baldach*: Thus has the *Enquirer* gratified us with an empty Concession, which by his Retractation is Δῶρον Ἄδωρον! I shall not need to observe to the Reader the Egregious folly of such Propositions. *We are not bound to the Laws of Moses* (i. e. as Terms of Communion) *nor any other, but such other* — That is, we had been *free*, but that we are in *bondage*. Negatives are infinite! and under that one word [such other] we may be pester'd with more then those Nice Laws of *Moses*. For. 1. Who can tell what *publick wisdom* may Determine? The publick wisdom of *Italy*, and *Spain*, has introduced such a Lumber of *those other* Terms, as hath eaten out almost all Religion, with the Divertisements of *Judaical*, *Parsnical*, whimsical Constitutions: The publick wisdom of *Abassia* has introduced *Circumcision* it self, and no thanks to

these Principles, or the Discourses of *Erastian Novellists*, that the case is better with us.

2. *Peace and Charity* require no other Terms then *those plain ones laid down in the Gospel*; *Charity* teaches us not to lay *stumbling blocks* in the way of those that would come towards the Church; *Peace* requires us to unite *upon Christs own Terms*; But *the Name* of Peace is often used to destroy *the thing*: so Austin of old: *Eccl. fia nomine Armamini & contra Ecclesiam Dimicatis*. Thus are we gogled to part with our Christian Liberty for *Peace*, when as the parting with *the Ceremonies* would secure both *Peace*, *Charity*, and *Christian Liberty*. 3. It's very Childish to put the determination of *those other Terms* of Communion upon the Tresviri, *Publick wisdom*, *peace and Charity*. For what if they accord not in their votes about *the Terms?* what if perhaps *Publick wisdom* should clash with *Charity?* Charity should say I will have no Terms of Communion that may exclude Persons of *honest hearts*, though *weaker Intellectuals*; but *publick wisdom* should contend *for some other* intercalated conditions, which may render Divine Institutions more August and solemn; 4. No publick wisdom can possibly Determine upon *those other Terms*; in a way that shall secure the Interests of *Charity*, nor in what cases I am bound for *her sake* to restrain my self in the use of my Christian Liberty. For the prudent admeasurement between my Christian Liberty, and my Charity to my Christian Neighbour, depends upon the view of the particular Circumstances of time, place, Persons, which cannot come under the prospect of *publick wisdom*: Suppose a Command were given forth from publick wisdom, that I should at such a time, and in such a place drive a Coach with violence down the High-way, and when I come to execute this Command, I find multitudes of little Children playing in that High-way; the Circumstance *of these Persons* was not foreseen by *publick wisdom*; must that therefore take place of *my Charity* to destroy the lives of these little ones? or my *Charity* submit to *publick wisdom*, and fall pell mell in amongst them? Our Saviour has Commanded us *not to offend any of his little ones*; telling me that if I do, *It were better that a Millstone were hang'd about my neck, and I cast into the sea*: publick wisdom may perhaps command me to do something not sinful in it self, but when I come to Obey, I find evidently it must scandalize them; I refer it to *Charity*, *peace*, *and prudence* to determine this case between them.

§. 2. His second generous Concession is. *There lyes now no more bonds upon the Consciences of Christians, then did upon the Ancient Patriarchs, saving those improvements our Saviour has made upon the Law of Nature, and those few positive institutions of his expressly set down in the Gospel*: And what a blessed day were it with the Christian world,

if

if we might see this made good! This would shut out of doors all those *Jamm Articles*, penn'd by *wise Reconcilers*, to perswade the combating Parties first to shake hands, and then to fall more furiously to Cudgels. This would shut out of doors all Humane impositions: forestalling our Communion with the Christian Church.

But now Mark the Retractation. — *And that men obeying these are at liberty to conform to whatsoever Common Reason, Equity, and publick Authority shall impose.* Had he not turn'd wrong at the Hedge Corner, it should have follow'd thus. — *And that men obeying these, are at Liberty* to enjoy all the Priviledges of the Gospel. But. 1. Is not this a broad contradiction, that there's no more bonds upon our Consciences then upon the Patriarchs, and yet we are bound to submit to those other terms, *imposed by publick authority*? That is, *we are at Liberty upon their Terms*, but only for one thing, that *we are not at Liberty upon their Terms*: And we may serve God *as cheap as they*, but that we must *serve him at dearer rates*: Did *Abraham* receive the Modes of worshipping God from *Gerar*, or the Terms of serving God from *Egypt*? and yet those Kings where he sojourned were friendly, and extended their Royal bounty to him. 2. *We are at Liberty to conform to whatsoever common Reason Equity, and publick authority shall impose*: At Liberty *to conform*? but are we at Liberty *not to conform, if common Reason* oppose *publick Determinations*? It's an idle thing to put the determination of my Liberty upon *Reason, Equity and authority*, unless we were assured they should *always agree*, which yet in some Countries may not be till the *secular Games*, or *the Greek Calends*. 3. This is in effect to say, that if we obey what Christ commands us, we are *at Liberty to give away our Liberty in all the rest*: whereas our Liberty was given us, not to give it away *at a clap*, but to dispense it *in parcels*, as weak Christians have occasions to borrow of us.

§. He concedes yet further, for Liberality grows upon his good Nature. *Our Christian enfranchisement discharges us not only from a necessity of observing the Law of Moses, and the Rites of Judaism, but further, and especially sets us at Liberty to pursue our own Reason.* And can he pretend to be a Rational Creature, that will not submit to it's Dictates? If ever Christian Liberty have scope enough, it must be when it exspatiates in the fields of *our own Reason*; I am confident, the most straight-Laced precisian cannot pretend he is pincht: But now the Limitation! — *And to Obey any Laws of men that shall not contradict the express Laws of the Scriptures.*

I suppose there are very few or none in the world that form their Laws expresly contrary *to Scripture Laws*, and yet they may make such as may as *effectually* frustrate the design of

Scripture Laws, as if they had in Terms point blanck contradicted them: A rare Liberty this is; and 'twas the foundation of that Gentlemans humour, who profes's't he would Preach in *a Fools Coat*, if *the King should Command* him. For I do not remember that that contradicts any *expreſs Law*: amongſt all the crafty devices of *the* Devil to induce our Grand-mother Eve *to eat of the Tree of Knowledge*; and of all the weak excuſes of *Eve* for eating of that Tree, I wonder: This was not thought on, that it was not contrary to *any expreſs Law of God*. For. 2. Gen. 16. *God commanded* the man *ſaying, of every Tree of the Garden* thou *may'ſt freely eat: But of the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil* thou *ſhalt not eat*: But it ſeems the Devil had not learnt the Sophiſtry to evade the precept, becauſe the *expreſs Law* was given to *the man*, and not to *the woman*: There are *Conſequential Laws* which we have *no liberty to contradict*: That a Miniſter contradict not, deſtroy not *the ends of his Miniſtry*; a Chriſtian *the ends of his Chriſtianity*: And it had been impoſſible that all Negatives ſhould be expreſſed, *Thou ſhalt not ſtand upon thy head*: *Thou ſhalt not wear a Fools Coat*: *Thou ſhalt not play at Dice, or Cards, in the Worſhip of God*: but thus he thinks he has made goodproviſion for a ſafe conformity to the Ceremonies, becauſe it is not ſaid; *Thou ſhalt not uſe the Croſs in Baptiſm*; *Thou ſhalt not uſe Cream, Oyl, Spittle*; *Thou ſhalt not conjure out the Devil*. At which *backdore* came in all the Superſtitious ſopperies of *Rome*. And with this paſſeport we may travel all over the world, from Rome to the Port, from thence amongſt the Tartars, and Chineſes, and conform to all, for perhaps we ſhall not meet with one Conſtitution that contradicts *an expreſs Law of Scripture*:

4. *Conceſſion.* p. 191. I have a power *in utramque, and may do, or leave undone all thoſe matters that are not defined in Scripture.* This indeed makes amends for all: for if it be part of my liberty to *leave undone*, what's not defined *there*, as well as *to do* what is not ſo, I have no great Reaſon to complain for want of *liberty*; but yet there is a Reſtriction behind that recals one half of this —— *According as publick Laws, and the ends of all Society, ſhall require.* Thus all along the Reader will obſerve that he ſeems to retreat *from his Fort in the Conceſſion*, and when we are mounted he *ſprings his Mine*, and blows us all up, *with his Retractation.* The ſumm of this liberty then is thus much: we have a liberty *In utramque*, but you ſhall be determined *to one*: you may do *which you will*, provided you do which *another commands you*; you may *purſue your own Reaſon*, provided you do *not purſue it*, but the *publick wiſdom*; you are not tyed up *to any other inſtitutions*, ſave only thoſe *plain ones of the Goſpel*, provided you be obliged *to ſuch other* as *Authority commands*. This is ſuch an *utramque*, that I have been ſtudying what ſhould be the *ſubſtantive* to it, and I cannot imagine what, unleſs it be *in utramque*, either *a good benefice*, or a *Comfortable importance*: I ſhall further offer theſe things.

1. Chriſtian

1. Christian Liberty may be restrained by *publick Authority*, *and by private Reason*, but if *publick Authority* restrain it *one way*, and my *private Reason* would restrain it *another*, and the publick authority shall carry it against my own Reason, not only *Christian*, but *Humane Liberty* is violated.

2. The perpetual determining of my liberty to *one part*, that I may in *no case* act the *other way*, whether it be by an *external compulsory power*, or by *my own superstition*, is a violation and destruction of my Christian Liberty.

3. *Authority*, *peace*, *Charity* prevailing with *my Reason*, to determine *one way*, will not violate Christian Liberty, for when the great ends of *Peace and Charity* shall cease to be obtained by such determination, it's supposed also that *Reason will cease*, and Authority *ought to cease*, to continue such determination.

4. If *Peace*, *and Charity* shall cease to call for such a determination *ad unum*, and thereupon *my Reason cease* to put me upon such a determination, and yet *Authority* shall continue its determination; my *Christian Liberty* will warrant me to follow my *own Reason*.

That which was the intolerable burthen of the Jews, which they were not able to bear, our Enquirer tells, P. 186. was especially this: *That the Law of Moses enjoyn'd a great number of little observances, which by their multitude were hard to be remembred, by their Nicety difficult to be observed, and by their meer positive nature, and having no essential goodness in themselves, had less power upon the conscience of men, to awaken their care, and diligence about them; and because it's hard for the mind of man to attend to many things at once, especially if also the things in which his care and obedience is required, be such as are not enacted in his Conscience, and which he can see no other Reason of, or advantage by his obedience but meerly his obedience, therefore was that Law called impossible*: This, say the Dissenters, would be their case, should they submit to what the *Enquirer* pleads for, and therefore an infringment of their Christian Liberty.

There is one Text of Scripture by which he will prove that his is the true Notion of Christian Liberty: *The Apostle* (says he) *in several of his Epistles, but especially that to the Romans, enjoyns the Christians in their scruples about eating of certain Meats, and in the conduct of themselves to consult Charity towards their weak Brethren, the peace of the Church, and their own edification*: *to which purpose* he advises us to see 14. Rom. and Chap. 15. Now if the Reader will be Ruled by me, we will venture for one quarter of an hour to look into those places, let the danger be what it will, and I am confident we shall not find our Christian Liberty determinable by any outward power: v. 3. The Apostle lays down the only true way of maintaining peace and love amongst Christians under their various apprehensions, and various practises. *Let not him that eateth, despise him that eateth not, and let not him that eateth not, judge him that eateth.*

And to this Rule the Canons of 1640. did attend. Can. 8. *We recommending* (not commanding) *to the ſerious conſideration of all good people, The doing reverence and obeiſſance at their coming in, and going out of the Churches, Chancels, and Chappels in the practiſe, or omiſſion of which Rite they deſire that the Rule of Charity, preſcribed by the Apoſtle, may be obſerved. That they which uſe this Rite, deſpiſe not them which uſe it not, and that they who uſe it not, condemn not thoſe that uſe it.* Which Rule was it applied to all other matters of the like nature, would undoubtedly preſerve what of *Love is left*, and recover that meaſure of *Chriſtian amity, which is loſt*. Peace *may be had* under *differing notions* about indifferent things, and *peace muſt be had* under *differing practiſes* ſuitable to thoſe *differing notions*, not by ſcrewing up *the weak* to the Latitude which *the ſtrong* allows himſelf, nor by pulling down *the ſtrong* to the narrow practiſes, wherein *the weak* are confined, but by *the ſtrong* Chriſtians not deſpiſing *the weak*, and *the weak Chriſtians* not judging his more grown, *and ſtronger Brother*; v. 4. The Apoſtle gives a Reaſon againſt this uncharitable judgment: *who art thou that judgeſt another mans ſervant*: every Chriſtian as to *his Conſcience*, is *Alieni juris*: *the Servant of God*: And if he be ſummon'd before a forreign Tribunal, may plead, It is *Coram non Judice. To his own Maſter he ſtandeth or falleth*: v. 5. Let *every man be fully perſwaded in his own mind*: The things before us may perhaps be *indifferent in themſelves*, but yet if we have not a full aſſurance that they *are ſo*, we are bound to ſuſpend *our act*. For as *our rejoycing muſt be in our ſelves, and not in another*, ſo muſt our *ſatisfaction*; 'Tis not the clearneſs of a practiſe in anothers mind that will warrant my acting, I muſt be fully ſatisfied *in my own mind*. v. 13. The Apoſtle lays down an excellent Rule for the prudent reſtraint of our Chriſtian Liberty. *Let us not therefore judge one another, but let every man judge this rather, that no man put a ſtumbling block, or an occaſion to fall in his Brothers way*. If my *Chriſtian Liberty* will warrant me *to act*, yet *Chriſtian Charity* will teach me *to moderate* my ſelf in *the uſe of that liberty*, when ſuch acting would occaſion the ſin of him that is not ſo perſwaded of the Lawfulneſs of my fact; which is to be limited to things of this nature whereof he treats, namely things indifferent, for if my Brother will be offended at what God has made my duty, there's no remedy, but that he lay aſide his *unjuſt offence*, and not that I lay aſide my *neceſſary duty*: v. 15. The Apoſtle gives a Reaſon of his former Rule: *If thy Brother be grieved with thy Meat, then walkeſt thou not charitably*; And much more if he be ſcandalized, and drawn into ſin: Is it not a moſt unchriſtian humour to inſiſt ſo peremptorily upon *doing*, becauſe in it ſelf *Lawful*; when Charity *countermands that doing*, and therefore 'tis *unlawful in the uſe*. *Deſtroy not him with thy meat for whom Chriſt dyed*: ſurely thou haſt little value for a ſoul redeemed by

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the blood of Christ, if thou wilt for *a sorry indifferent thing* hazard its eternal damnation: our *liberty to act* must stand out of the way, when *a Brothers soul* comes in place; v. 19. *Let us follow the things that make for peace, and the things that may edify one another.* Here we have another Rule for the restraint of our liberty in things indifferent: When the using my liberty would disturb the peace of the Church, I must cease to act: for *the strong* may forbear what he judges *Lawful*, and yet *the weak* cannot do what he judges *sinful*: And therefore *to the strong* he speaks thus: v. 22. *Hast thou Faith? have it to thy self before God*: Art thou perswaded such a thing is Lawful, notwithstanding the many violent presumptions of others of it's sinfulness, keep thy judgment to thy self; trouble not the Church with thy Orations, let thy disputing talent yeeld to the weak judgment of others. But to the weak he speaks thus. v. 23. *He that doubteth is damned if he eat; because he eateth not of Faith, for whatsoever is not of Faith is sin.*

All this while here's not one syllable of restraining Christian Liberty by the *Authority of another*, by *outward force*, and *violence*, all must be determined by a Christians *own Prudence*, as moved by *the edification of anothers Charity to his soul*, and *the peace of the community*: not a word to consult my *own secular advantage, and emolument*; Not a letter that *Conscience, Christian Liberty, private wisdom*, my *own Reason* must be impressed to militate under the command and conduct of the *publick wisdom*, the *publick Reason*, or *the publick Conscience*.

That is therefore the thing which he must bring about by some *links of consequences*, some *trains of deductions*; And he advances towards his conclusion, by winding staires, that we may be led *sensim sine sensu* to the top of his matter, to the height of his design without taking notice of our ascent, and the whole contrivance of this Chapter lyes in the Dexterous management of this one Engine.

(1) His first Postulatum is this: *That Christian Liberty doth consist in a freedom in utramque*: (pray do not mistake him) *that is, that antecedently to the Considerations of prudence, peace, and charity, it's equally in the power of a Christian to do or not to do, any, or all those things that are not expresly forbidden by the H. Scriptures.* Very good! Then I will assume: But *to love God with all my heart, and soul, and strength*, is one of those things which God hath *not expresly forbidden in the H. Scripture*: Therefore *antecedently to the Considerations of prudence, peace and charity, It's in the power of a Christian* to love, or not to love God with all his heart, and that *Christian Liberty consists in this freedom in utramque.*

I am not so uncharitable as to think that the *Enquirer* owns *this conclusion*, or that *any principle* he holds will *inferr it*: All I note it for is to evince to him, that he has worded his matters besides his own intention, and that he intended really to have said: That *Antecedently to the Considerations of prudence, & charity*

it's *equally in the power of a Christian to do, or not to do*, any *or all those things that are not expressly forbidden by, nor contradict the express Laws of the Scriptures*. And taking the words according to *the presumption of his meaning*, and not *the Letter*, I say. 2. Here's something more then Truth. That Christian Liberty gives us a power *to do* what is not *expressly forbidden*: many things are forbidden *by consequence*, which are not *expressly forbidden*. I pray shew me an *express prohibition* to *recognize the Popes Supremacy*. To *subscribe the Tridentine Decrees*; And if this be part of the *Enquirers* Christian Liberty, to do, what is not *expressly forbidden*, I hope he will not find himself aggrieved if we judge that *he*, and some others of *the same Latitude*, are not at so irreconcileable a distance from Rome, as they would be thought.

2. As *all is not Truth*, so neither is this *the whole Truth*: *for Christian Liberty* gives us a Power to *do*, or *not do* the things neither *commanded, nor forbidden*, not only *Antecedently* to *the considerations of prudence, peace, and charity*, but also. 1. *subsequently* to those considerations, that is, assoon as ever those *considerations* shall *cease*; and 2. *concomitantly* with those considerations; that is, further they shall *reach*: For though I suspend *my act* in charity to my weak Brother, yet am I impowred to act *at the same time* out of the Cognizance of my weak Brother; and assoon as those *considerations of peace and charity* shall vanish, no other considerations separate from them, ought to keep the restraint on foot, but my liberty recovers its former lustre.

3. There is much ambiguity in the jumbling, the considerations of *prudence, peace, and charity* together: for the considerations of *peace and charity* are *objective*, such as I am to consider as *the motives, and inducements* to restrain my liberty: but the consideration of *prudence* is *subjective*: that is, *Prudence* is that virtue which is to make a judgment, when, and in what cases, those two *peace, and charity*, are *considerations* sufficient to enforce *such a restraint*: so that, would we speak plain English, the matter amounts to no more then this: that *Antecedently* to my *prudent* consideration of the concerns of *peace, and charity*, I may do, or not do, whatsoever is *in it self indifferent*: which Truth will be too feeble a foundation to erect his intended superstructure upon.

(2) His second *Postulatum* is this: *That it is no infringment, but an exercise of this liberty, actually to be determined to that side towards which* prudence, or charity, *shall incline*: *Though in the mean time the other side be in general as Lawful as that*: It would ill become me to teach him how to word his own conceptions, though I should rather have chosen to have express'd my self; not *disjunctively*. [*To that side towards which* prudence or charity *shall incline*] but rather *conjunctively*. [*prudence and charity*] or most properly [*prudence at the invitation of charity*] for *prudence* enclines me neither one way nor other further then as she is directed by the considerations of *peace, and charity*, the *good*

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of my self or Neighbour; nor can the interests of these two ever be divided. But I answer. 1. That *it is no infringment of Christian Liberty* for *prudence*, to determine upon my own act, as that *I will not do an indifferent thing*, when peace, and the spiritual good of my Brother prohibit me; Because the Scripture, which contains *the Charter of Christian Liberty*, has also directed my prudence, thus, and in this case *to restrain it*: but yet (which is the thing he drives at) to be *determined to one side by outward power, civil force, naked Authority, or will*; when my *own Reason* can see no Prudence is such a Determination, is an evident infringment of my liberty: so that *to be determined to one side* may be an infringment, when I am determined by violence, or menaces; and yet to determine my self upon the considerations of *Charity, and Peace*, may be none; for in the former case, I see *no Reason* of my obedience, *but my obedience*; but in the latter I am determined by *my own election*, upon *rational grounds*, becoming a *rational Creature*.

2. Though a prudential determination not to act, at the Request or command of peace, and charity, when *otherwise* I might have acted, be *no infringment* of my Radical Liberty, yet it is *a restraint of my Liberty*, which the *Enquirer* calls, p. 208. *A denying himself some part of his liberty*, and therefore it seems improperly called *an exercise of Liberty*: 'Tis indeed an *exercise* of *my Prudence*, an exercise of *my Charity*, but hardly an exercise of my Liberty, further then as *the will* is *the principle* of such restraint, and determination.

3. Though Prudence may teach me *not to act*, but to adhere to the side of Charity; yet Prudence must not take her measures for not acting from such poor, low, *selfish considerations*, as the saving, or gaining those outward advantages to my self, which are the great Idols of Prudence *falsely so called*, which is no better then *carnal policy*, and *sinful selfishness*; but from the interest of *Gods glory*, the advancement of his Gospel, and all this *bona fide*, for if Prudence mistakes in her reckonings, an imaginary good end will not indemnify, and save her harmless.

(3) *These two points thus gained* (as the Enquirer fancies) *will give abundant foundation for a third to be inferred from them*, viz. *That whatsoever is so free to me, that I may do it, or not do it, according as I shall be inclined by the considerations of Brotherly charity, and compassion, must of necessity be also, as free to me to obey the Magistrate, and serve publick peace, and order in.*

Let us but resolve this unwieldy proposition into it's distinct branches, and we shall need no more to expose it's nakedness. 1. *What soever I may do at the command of charity, I may do at the command of Authority in order to publick peace*: Now to furnish him with a minor: *but I may practise the Ceremonies at the command of Charity*, therefore I may practise them at the command *of Authority in order to publick peace*. And now for the proof of the minor we are as far to seek as ever.

This then is the Quintessence of his Reasonings, the utmost

resort of all the wit, and learning of this Chapter, which in other, and more advantagious words to his purpose he gives us thus: *Whatsoever I may do in compassion to my* Brothers *infirmity, surely that I may much more do in Reverence to Gods Ordinance, the Lawful Magistrate*, which is *the point I have all this while drove at.*

But this conclusion however he seems cock-sure of it, will no ways follow from those premises. And the fallacy of it is so thin that it's transparent to the weakest eye. In the first *postulatum* he allows a freedom to act in utramque, *antecedently to the Considerations of Prudence, peace, and Charity*: In the second he asserts, that it's no infringment of this Liberty *to be determined to one side by prudence, or Charity.* In his third, that we may (and therefore may) act or not act according as we shall be determined *by Authority.* I shall summ up my answer in these particulars, and conclude,

§. 1. Though *the Lawful Magistrate be Gods Ordinance*, yet it remains a Question undecided, whether he be *Gods Ordinance so far, and for this end*, to determine of things indifferent, antecedently to the determination of Gods providence, by gathering together all due Circumstances which ought to determine the Natural indifferency of the things aforesaid: Many things are true *secundum quid*, which are not so *simpliciter.* But if he shall judge it a Prize worth all his labour to impose upon us with so broad a Sophism, much good may his own Dream do him.

§. 2. Though *the Lawful Magistrate be Gods Ordinance*, yet it's a greater Question still, whether he may determine my Liberty *in utramque*, to the *one side*, when *Charity* would determine it *to the other*: that is, whether he has power to *Command me to act*, when Charity *prohibits me to act*, or make it my *duty to move*, when *Charity* commands me *to stand still.*

It's true the concerns of *a true and desirable peace*, and Charity are inseparable: nothing can advance the design of the former, but what does really subserve the interest of the latter: for so has the Apostle conjoin'd them, 14. Rom. 19. *Let us follow after the things that make for peace, and things wherewith we may edify one another.* Whatsoever advances the edification of my Brother, advances also Peace, unless imprudent men have made the Terms of peace so desperate, that it's not attainable, without the ruine of Charity, which the *Enquirer* confesses *an essential part of our Religion*: but yet it's possible that the Command of a Magistrate may oppose the concerns of Charity, in which case, I think without offence I may say, he is none of Gods Ordinance to that end and purpose, nor has God given me any Liberty to obey in that case: And as such a Command would be a direct invasion of my Christian

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Liberty, ſo obedience to ſuch a command would be a plain betraying of it: If therefore the freedom to act *in utramque* be determined to *the one ſide*, by charity, I have no freedom (under that poſiture of Circumſtances) to ſubmit to a determination to *the other ſide* at the Command of Authority.

§. 3. As *the Lawful Magiſtrate is Gods Ordinance*, ſo is it an *expreſs Ordinance* of the ſame God, not to uſe my Liberty in indifferent things, when by ſuch uſe *my Brother is made weak, or ſtumbled, or offended*. 14. Rom. 21: And it's a hard way of concluding; That what *one Ordinance of God countermands*, that I may do *at the command of another*. God has oftens ſuperſeded *general Commands* by *ſpecial ones*, but I find not that he has inſtituted any *general Ordinance* to ſuſpend the duties of a *ſpecial Command*. He that ſays, *If thy Brother be offended, eat not*, has given no power to any to ſay; *Though thy Brother be offended, yet eat!* And if our own prudence upon the view of all Circumſtances ſhall determine that 'tis my duty *not to act* at the prohibition of Charity, notwithſtanding a Command *to act* by the Magiſtrate, yet cannot this be interpreted *Irreverence to Gods Ordinance the Lawful Magiſtrate*, unleſs we will ſuppoſe, that by ſhewing obedience to *the one*, we muſt be irreverent to *the other* of Gods Ordinances.

§ 4. Chriſtian Liberty is committed to every Chriſtian to keep for *the uſe and behoof of his weak Brother*, and not to reſign at *the meer pleaſure* of another; Publick peace, and Charity ſhall not need to weigh againſt one another, for their intereſts ſweetly meet together, and kiſs each other; but when a Command iſſuing out from *will, pleaſure*, and *bare power*, ſhall come in compoſition with them, Chriſtian Liberty has ſecured me, and prudence will counſel me, and Charity enclines me, and God commands me what courſe to ſteer, which way to take.

§. 5. The Magiſtrate himſelf is Gods Ordinance, the great Officer and Miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt to ſecure, and preſerve the *great Charter* of Chriſtian Liberty ſacred, and inviolate, againſt all the encroachments of thoſe who would commit a rape upon a Priviledge, in it ſelf ſo innocent, to others ſo uſeful, and in the price payd for it ſo invaluably dear and precious.

The ſumm of which is this much, that though charity and peace are always agreed when to uſe, when to reſtrain my liberty, yet if any power without reference to the concerns of theſe ſhall endeavour to reſtrain my liberty, by commanding me to do what Reaſon and Prudence ſhall inform me, are repugnant to thoſe ends; ſuch Command is a plain infringment of my liberty, and my obedience a plain abuſe of my liberty, unleſs we can imagine, That it's an exerciſe of my Chriſtian Liberty to act

act against the great ends of Christianity; or an exercise of my freedom to run against the Dictates of my judgment, and Conscience.

To conclude therefore, if this be that great thing, he has *all this while drove at*, I must tell him, he drives at too furious a rate for me to keep pace with him; but thus would *Phaeton* drive, though he set the world on fire; such was *Jehue's* Career, though he sought himself more then God, and so have I seen your hair-brain'd Drivers resolve to *whistle out their whistle*, though the Cart turn over.

CHAP. VIII.

Of a Tender Conscience; what it is? and it's Priviledges.

IT was a malicious Artifice of *Julian* the *Apostate*, to erect the Images of the Heathen Gods in the *Forum* near his own statue, reducing hereby the Christians to this *Dilemma* either to seem to worship the Images, whilst they Reverenced his statue, or to contemn their Soveraign, by refusing to bow before the Images: into the same straights would the Masters of Ceremonies bring us: That either our *Loyalty* must Argue us into a *Conformity* to their intentions: or *non-Conformity* shall be an interpretative contempt of *Authority*: Thus has it ever been a succesful Policy to twist their own concerns with those of Majesty, and Royalty, that they may not be separated. And when they have laid up their little knacks amongst the sacred κειμήλια, in his Majesties Jewel-house, to touch one Ceremony, is to steal the Crown.

Conscience has ever hetherto maintained a good Repute amongst the more Civiliz'd part of Mankind, and he has been adjudged a Person unmeet for converse, that should once prostitute and debauch it; It will therefore be expedient at least, first to represent it as an *usurper*, and then to execute it as a *Traytor*.

I pittied that Innocent Person who being fast asleep, and dreaming no harm, an assassinat puts into his hand the bloody knife wherewith he had committed an execrable Murther: upon which violent presumption being apprehended he is arraign'd, condemn'd, executed.

Thus the Jews found no better way to deliver our B. *Saviour* over to the Secular Powers, then to misrepresent him as an Enemy to *Temple, and Cæsar*; Church, and State: and when they had arrayed him in a Mock-robe, put a Reed-sceptet in his hand

hand, and a Crown of Thorns on his head, lead him out with Triumph to be Crucified.

The *Enquirer* being very sensible that this *Conscience* has been an old Enemy to the dear concerns of Ceremony, tells us feelingly: That *unless we can pull down this usurper, we must look for no Magistracy; and except we discover the weakness and absurdity of this pretension, all endeavours of Restoring uniformity in the Church will be vain, and useless.*

The Master-piece of *Jezabels* Policy was to make *Naboth* more then he desired to be, that he might be really less then he deserved to be. 1. King. 21. 9. *Proclaim a Fast, and set Naboth on high among the people; and set two men Sons of Belial to bear false witness against him saying: Thou didst blaspheme God and the King; then carry him out, and stone him that he may dye.*

This Conscience (says he) *is thought to have not only a priviledge, but a kind of prærogative, to carry with it an exemption from all humane Laws, but especially Ecclesiastical; it pretends to be Gods peculiar, and exempt from any inferiour Cognizance; Nay it looks like a Dictatorian Authority, and seems to be* Legibus soluta, *This (they would make us believe) can limit the Magistrate, null Laws, forbid execution, and which is more, change the very nature of things, and make that good and holy, which was wicked, and rebellious before. This can Canonize any Opinion, Legitimate any Action, warrant any extravagancy in the person that owns it, Whatsoever he thinks, can be no Heresy; and whatsoever he does, can be no sin:*

In which charge he has sprinkled here and there a word of Truth, for he that would be believed in *a great falshood*, must be sure to intersperse some *little verities*. Conscience is *a most Absolute Monarch* indeed, if it has all these prærogatives, but this is the great prærogative of his own Conscience, to bear false witness against his Neighbour; and (if we may call things by their proper Names) by unworthy, scandalous insinuations, sinister reflexions, and false accusations against Dissenters, to provoke the Magistrate to proscribe them as Out-Laws. But I answer.

§. 1. The highest Immunities I ever met with, ascribed to Conscience are in Bishop *Saunderson*, a most Zealous stickler for Ceremonies. Serm. on 14. Rom. 23. *There cannot* (says he) *be imagined a higher contempt of God then for a Man to despise the power of his own Conscience, which is the highest under Heaven, as being Gods most immediate Deputy for the Ordering his life, and ways;* Βροτοῖς ἅπασιν ἡ συνείδησις θεός. *Could the Heathen say. Conscience is a God to all men;* which is somewhat a higher Note, then the *Enquirer* makes the Dissenters sing: that *it pretends to be Gods peculiar, and is exempt from any inferiour Cognizance.*

§. 2. It's a most injurious charge, if applied to Non-conformists, that *Conscience can alter the nature of things, make that good which was wicked, and Rebellious before, &c.* All they say in this

this particular is with *Ames. Theſ. de Conſc*: 18. „ Tanto vis eſt „ Conſcientiæ, ut actionem ſuâ naturâ mediam, efficiat Bo-„ nam, vel malam; & ſuâ naturâ Bonam, reddat malam, quam-„ vis illam quæ ſuâ naturâ, mala eſt, non poſſit convertere „ in Bonam. *So great is the power of Conſcience, that it can make an Action in it ſelf indifferent, to become either good or evil* (viz. to the Perſon) *and an Action, in it's own Nature good, to become evil. Although it cannot make that which is in it's own Nature* evil, *to become* good. Which Powers are clearly aſcribed to Conſcience by *the Apoſtle*. 1. The power to make *an indifferent*, or *good action* in it ſelf, to become *evil to him that judgeth it to be evil*, and yet will venture upon it: 14. Rom. 14. *To him that eſteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean*. 2. It's power to make an indifferent thing *good*: uſing it to Gods Glory, with all other due circumſtances, is clear alſo from 1. Tit. 15. *Unto the pure all things are pure*. But that it can *alter the nature* of things; that it can make an action *evil in it ſelf* to become *good*, that it can *null Laws*, are ſuch powers, as no Caſuiſts have ever attributed to it, but thoſe whoſe Conſciences carry an exemption from any neceſſity of ſpeaking truth, when 'tis in order to the Advancement of their cauſe. But it is too common for men to charge others with the wickedneſs of their own thoughts, and hearts, and what was once their *own Old Crime*, to make other mens *New Accuſations*.

§. 2. As to the Power of Conſcience *to excuſe Errour from Hereſy*: we ſay, that there may be a *material* Hereſy, which is not *formally* ſo: what a Man judges to be a *real Truth*, though poſſibly it may be *a dangerous Errour*; yet unleſs there was *Prava Diſpoſitio* as the cauſe of that Errour, or ſomething of *Obſtinacy in the will* in Adhæring to it; *Errour, and Heterodoxy* it is, but *Hereſy* it cannot be; that is, it will not Denominate *the Perſon a Heretick*: Thus the Learned and judicious Mr. *Hales*: *Hereſy is an act of the will, not of the Reaſon; and is indeed* a lye, *not a miſtake: for elſe how could that ſaying of Auſtin be true.* Errare poſſum hæreticus eſſe nolo. *I may poſſibly miſtake, but am reſolved never to be an Heretick*: That is, by a tenacious and obſtinate abetting any miſtake after Conviction.

There are three things which we are obliged to wait upon our *Enquirer in*, 1. Whilſt he entertains us with his diſcourſe *what Conſcience is*. 2. What a *Tender Conſcience is*. 3. What *priviledges, or exemptions* it may claim to?

[1] *What Conſcience is*: *Now* (ſays he) *if men loved plain Engliſh, and to underſtand what they ſay, it is plainly this, and no more*: a man's *own mind, or underſtanding, under the diſtinct conſideration of reflecting upon himſelf, his own actions, and duty*. He may call this *plain Engliſh*, if he pleaſes, define, and deſcribe his *own Conſcience* how he will, but we poor people are edified much what as with the Rhemiſts *Paraſceve, Azymes, and Paraclete*; who ſeeing there was no remedy but they muſt Tranſlate, were reſolved that few ſhould be the wiſer for *the tranſlation*.

There

There are somethings that look oddly in this Description.

§. 1. It seems very improper to assign *the mind or understanding* for the *Genus* of Conscience. For Conscience is not a *faculty*, but an *Act seated in a faculty*; Or the exercise of the faculty of the understanding, putting the will upon operation: Thus that fore-mentioned Bishop ibid. *The will of Man (which is the Fountain whence all our Actions immediately flow) should conform it self to the judgment of the Practique understanding, as to it's immediate Rule, and yeeld it self to be guided by it*; And indeed the Office of Conscience is not only *to judge what is good or evil*, according to those Notices it has of God from the light of Nature, and Scripture, nor only to take Cognizance whether the will has obey'd those Dictates of the practique understanding, but to be *a monitor and Counsellor*, nay a *Commander* to the *will* to act according to it's Discoveries of good or evil. *This is good*, therefore I charge thee to do it: and *this is evil*, therefore I command thee to avoid it.

§. 2. It seems very defective, in that it tells us of *the mind reflecting upon actions*, and yet mentions not with Reference *to whose Authority* it is so pragmatical, as to meddle with those Actions: whereas all that Conscience Dictates as *a Counsellour*; all that Conscience Determines *as a Judge*, is in *the Name of the supream and soveraign Jehovah*. 4. Jam. 12. *There's one Law-giver who is able to save, and to destroy, and who are thou that judgest another? 14. Rom. 4. Who art thou that judgest another mans Servant; to his own Master he standeth or falleth.*

§. 3. His Description seems very lame, in that he makes the whole employment of Conscience to be *reflection*: whereas 'tis in it's Commission to *Dictate before the fact*, as well as to *reflect upon the fact*. It teaches what we *ought to do*, as well as enquires and examines whether we *have done well or no*: And such a failure will expose us to great mistakes in this case; as that we are not bound to examine the Lawfulness of our work before we act; but to rush Headlong upon the precipices of dubious and suspected things, and examine them afterwards at leasure. Whereas the Apostle condemns the Gentiles, especially that they knew before such and such things to be evil, *and worthy of Death*, and yet not only *did those things*, but *took pleasure in those that did them*. 1 Rom. 32.

Of such a Conscience as this he will certainly make a proportionable emprovement: *For scarcely* (says he) *any man that says his Conscience is incontrollable will say, his own Opinion or Reason is* the ultimate Rule *of his actions*. Truly I believe so, nor any man neither that says his Conscience is *Controllable*, except he be out of his senses: for I would fainbe informed what *an ultimate Rule* signifies, with him that pretends to *speak plain English*, to them that understand nothing else? I have heard of a *subordinate and ultimate End*: And I have heard also of *a near and a Remote Rule*, but an *ultimate Rule* like that Monster which was *like a horse*, and yet *not a horse*, is *like sense*, but in truth very *Non-sense*.

All

All that we affirm of Conſcience as 'tis *a Rule*, is no more but this: That it is *the next*, and *immediate Guide*, *and Director of our Actions*; And that *the mind of God*, however notified to us, is the *next and immediate* Governour, or Director of Conſcience; That as nothing can poſſibly intervene between *the Command* of Conſcience, and *the will and executive power* in Man; ſo nothing can poſſibly interpoſe between *the Authority of God* and the Conſcience; and both theſe are expreſly owned by the above mentioned learned Perſon. Dr. S. 1. That God is the *immediate* Controller of Conſcience by his word, and will revealed to us. *Conſcience* (ſays he) *is Gods moſt immediate Deputy, for the ordering the life, and ways of men.* 2. That Conſcience is the *immediate Rule* of our Actions; *The will of Man* (ſays he) *ſhould conform it ſelf to the judgment of the practique underſtanding, as to it's proper*, and immediate *Rule*.

And ſuch were once the Notions of that great Man, when he is profeſſedly pleading the cauſe of Conformity, which had never been waved but that wiſe men are aware, the cauſe not to be tenable, if Conſcience be not made a piece of *Non-ſenſe*, whoſe *Nature and Office* are therefore *inconſiderable*, becauſe *unintelligible*.

But ſome wiſe men or other it ſeems have formed a parcel of objections (or elſe he has formed them to their hands) which he will anſwer, and then ſuppoſe himſelf victorious.

1 *Objection. Allowing Conſcience to be nothing but the mind of Man, yet even ſo it's ſubject to no humane Laws: forasmuch as no Man can force me to think otherwiſe then I do, nor Compel me to be of his opinion, in the inward ſcience of my mind; my mind therefore or Conſcience is only obnoxious to God.*

To which *he Replies*. [The *anſwer to this is eaſy! for ſince my mind is not infallible: I may and muſt have ſomething to guide my mind, and that is it which we call* Law.]

To which I *rejoin*. That this is *an eaſy*, but not a *ſatisfactory* anſwer. For. 1. The *Remedy* is not proportionable to the *diſeaſe*: For if the Reaſon why my mind muſt have *ſomething elſe to guide it*, be, becauſe *the mind is not infallible*: the ſame Reaſon will informe us to have recourſe to a better guide then that which *he calls Law*, becauſe *Humane Laws are not infallible*: It will mend the matter but forrily to take me of from one *fallible guide*, and ſend me to *another*. 2. Since the mind of man is thus *fallible*, and there is a neceſſity that it have *ſomething elſe to guide it in it's determinations*, God has provided an *infallible directory* in his word, in all things concerning his immediate Worſhip, and that is it which we call *the Law of God*.

3. But if the *mind of Man be fallible* in it's Directions, as well as *Humane Laws*, It's ſafer to be guided by that which God has made my *next Director* though *fallible*, then by that which being *alſo fallible*, he has *not made ſo*. God has conſtituted Conſcience the *next, and immediate Counſellour* to my *will*, the *next, and immediate Deputy* under *himſelf*, and therefore to erre with a

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Humane Canon, against the *voice of Conscience*, is to despise and contemn the Authority of God *in whose Name* it speaks; whereas to *err with my Conscience*, against an *Humane Decree*, is but a part of that frailty, to which all imperfect Creatures are obnoxious. 4. Nor is it universally true what he says: that *the Law* (of Man) *morally obliges* (to follow it's Directions) *that is, it will be my sin, if I do not*: for it may be my sin if I *do obey in some cases*; as well as my sin, if I *do not in others*; at least the Apostles were of this opinion. 4. Act. 19. *Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken to you more than God judge ye.* Whatever inconveniences therefore shall arise, from an absolute resignation either to *the Laws of men*, or to our own *minds deceived by natural light*, we have the infallible word of God, which *is a light to our feet, and a Lamp to our paths*, for the guidance of our particular Actions.

2. Object: *But we are bound to obey the Dictates of our mind, or Conscience before any Law, or Command of any humane Authority, if they happen to interfere.*

He replies. *It's true in things notoriously, and plainly evil. — But where those* (the Law of God, or Reason) *are silent, there the Law of the Magistrate is the Immediate Rule of my Conscience, and then to contradict that, is to affront the Publick Tribunal, with a private Consistory*, &c.

To which *I Rejoin*. §. That he has given away his whole cause by *this one Concession*. That a higher Law of God *or Reason* may *make a nullity in the Law of the Magistrate*: for if Reason in any case may make such a nullity: it must either be *the publick Reason, or the private Reason*: If the former: then it amounts to no more then this goodly maxime, that *the Magistrates Reason may make a nullity in his Law*. But if it be the latter: that *private Reason* may make such a nullity, then Conscience guided, and directed by that Reason *cannot transgress the Law*, because *Reason has already disannulled it*, as to that particular Person: And if it be said, that it's only in things *notoriously evil*, that Reason has this Soveraignty to make a nullity in the Law; It's easily answered, that whatever my Reason judges evil, is notoriously evil as to me, for I have no way to make out *the Notoriety of the evil of a thing*, but *my Reason* informing it self from Gods Word.

§. 2. We are bound to obey the Dictates of our own Consciences, in not acting against them in those things which *only appear notoriously evil*; And God himself has tyed up Conscience from taking one step under those apprehensions. 14 Rom. 14. *To him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.* And the Reasons are very evident. 1. Because ,, *Bonum oritur ex integris, malum è quolibet Defectu.* The want of that single Circumstance of *the satisfaction of my Judgment* that it is Lawful makes the action sin. 2. He that has a prepared mind to *act contrary* to what he *takes* to be the Law of God, would *act accordingly*, if it *really were the Law of God*. As he that dares to strike a private Per-

Person, whom he takes for a Magistrate, would no doubt have struck him though he had been a Magistrate: Every man takes the voice of Conscience to be the voice of God, and he that will disobey that Dictate which he supposes the voice of God, will disobey that dictate which really proves to be his voice.

3. The goodness, or evil of an action is much estimated *by the will of the Doer.* He that judges an *action evil*, and yet will *do it*; God sees that though *the thing* was not evil, yet he had an *evil will.* The Action was not *materially* evil, but it was so *interpretative.* I must once more quote the same Learned person: *If a Man* (says he) *be fully perswaded in his Conscience, that a thing is unlawful, which yet in Truth is not so, the thing by him so judged unlawful cannot be done without sin. Even an erroneous Conscience bindeth thus far, that a Man cannot go against it, and be guiltless; because his practise should then run cross to his judgment, and so the thing could not be done in faith: for if* his reason *judge the thing to be evil, and yet he will do it, it argueth manifestly, that he hath* a will to do evil, *and so becometh a Transgressour of Gods General Law, which bindeth all men to eschew all evil.*

§. 3. Nor is this *to affront the publick Tribunal with a private Consistory, nor set up my own opinion against Gods institution*: for it's Gods own institution, 14. Rom. 5. *Let every Man be fully perswaded in his own mind.*

3. *Objection*: But *if after all my Consideration of the Reason of publick Laws, I cannot satisfy my self of the Lawfulness of the thing commanded, I must then Govern my self by my Conscience, and not by the Law.*

He Replies. *If the unlawfulness of the thing commanded is not as plain, and visible, as the Command of God for obeying Authority, my opinion, or Conscience, will be no excuse to me; Because I forsake a Certain Rule, to follow an uncertain.*

To which I *Rejoin*: That he has made a very *unequal Comparison*: viz. Between the *unlawfulness of the particular thing*; and the *general Command of obeying*: whereas the comparison ought to have been between; either *Gods General Command not to act against my Conscience*; and his *General Command to obey Authority*; or else between *the unlawfulness of that particular action*, and Gods Command *to obey in that particular*: It is plain in *the General*, that I ought to *obey Authority.* And it's as plain *in the General*, that I ought *not to sin against the dictate of my Conscience.* It may be doubtful, and not so plain, that *this particular action* is sinful; but then it's doubtful, and no more plain, that *in this case* 'tis my duty to obey. Compare the General Law of obeying *the Laws*, with the general Law of *not sinning against my Conscience*, and it's much more plain, visible, or what he pleases, that I ought not to sin against my Conscience, then that I ought to obey the Laws of Humane appointment; for that I ought to obey the latter admits of *many exceptions*, but

that

that I ought not to act against the former *admits of none.* And if Conscience may deceive me in *a particular instance*; so also may the Law deceive me in *the particular Command.*

This will more evidently appear, if we take the Ranverse of the case, thus: *If the Lawfulness of* the thing *commanded by the Law, be not as plain and visible, as the Command of God not to act against Conscience, no Command of the Magistrate will excuse me, because I forsake a certain Rule, to follow an uncertain.*

God commands me *to obey Authority*, the same God commands me *not to sin against my light.* In some cases I am *not bound to obey Authority*; but in *no case am I allow'd to act against my light*: It's very clear that the Magistrate has *a power to Command*, but *not so clear* that he has a power *to determine things indifferent, and make those determinations the conditions of my enjoying the* means of Salvation: But it's very certain, that *Conscientia erronea ligat, licet non obligat*, An erroneous Conscience though it oblige me not to act against what God has made a Duty; yet it binds me up from ever acting against it's Convictions; And therefore it's safest to adhære to *the clearer side*, and not to act against the Decision of Conscience, in compliance with a Command which it's uncertain *whether it oblige or no.*

And in a word, if this way of our *Enquirers* Reasoning be solid; Then it will not excuse a Protestant from sin, who refuses *to bow before an Image when the Magistrate Commands it*; Because it's plain *in the general*, that *we ought to obey Authority*, but not so plain that it's sinful *to bow before an Image*, if things *disputable* be less plain then *indisputable.*

4. *Objection*: But *if after all endeavours of satisfying my self to Obey the Humane Law, yet the thing commanded by the Magistrate (however innocent in it self) seems to be as plainly unlawful, as obedience is plainly a duty*; What Now?

He replies.) This case is pityable, and will make some abatement of the sin of Disobedience, but it doth not totally excuse it, much less make a nullity in the Law.

To which I *Rejoin.* That he has now made a very noddy of his Objector. That can suppose the thing commanded *innocent in it self*, and yet to *seem to him as plainly unlawful as obedience is a Duty*: But to the thing. 1. He has put the case very unfaithfully: For we suppose the things controverted, though Lawful in their *abstracted natures*, (and what actions are not so?) yet to be *really unlawful in their use*, upon a just ballancing of all Circumstances: for we conceive many things *Lawful out of worship*, which in worship are *not so*: Many things Lawful when used *without offence*, which are otherwise when they *give offence to the weak*: Many things Lawful when *Conscience is satisfied*, which are not so under it's *real dissatisfactions*; many things *Lawful to be used*, under *the power of which 'tis sinful to be brought:*

2. We

2. We say not that Conscience makes *a nullity in the Law*, but that under present Circumstances it will not suffer us to act: But if we had said so, we might perhaps have drunk in the Delusion from his own words so lately quoted. *Some higher Law of God, or Reason, by which my Conscience is guided, hath in that case made a nullity in the Law of the Magistrate.* 3. His Reason: Because *sin is a Transgression of the Law.* Applied to *the Law of God* is true; but when applied to *the Law of Man*, is not of *universal Truth*: for neither is the transgression of a humane Law *always a sin*: Nor at any time is it *the formal Reason of sin*, but because such transgression of the humane Law, transgresses some particular Law of God, or at least that General Law, to obey where we ought to do.

[2] His second Enquiry is, *What is a Tender Conscience?* And here that nothing sacred might escape the petulancy of Privileged Drolery, he is in a Rapture of Facetiousness, and makes fine sport with poor *Tender Conscience.*

When *Josiah* that great Pattern of all Royal virtues, the great instance of ripe Grace in green years had heard the book of the Law read, with those dreadful commi-nations thundred out against prevarication in that holy Law, and had duly-consider'd how his people had incurred *the menaces* by violating *the precepts* thereof, he *rent his cloaths, and went to Enquire of the Lord*: who gives him this Answer: *Because thy heart was Tender, and thou hast humbled thy self, I also have heard thee, saith the Lord.* 2. Kin. 22. 19.

Wisdom it self has taught us: That *the man is happy that feareth always; but he that hardens himself, shall fall into mischief.* 28. *Prov.* 14. They that know the World is thick sown with snares, and those snares baited with suitable temptations, will see Reason to walk very cautelously towards the world, and to maintain a Godly jealousy over themselves, least they be surprized with the deceitfulness of sin: But there are a daring sort of jolly Adventurers, that fear no colours; that will come up to the mouth of a Canon, that neither regard Gods threatnings, or warnings, the Devils stratagems, or the Ambuscadoes of the flesh, but being fool-hardy, make a mock of sin, and all preciseness about it; who think it a piece of gallantry to dance on the brink of that præcipice, that hangs over the bottomless pit, and can find no fitter essays of their valour, and skill, then how to come within a hairs-breadth of Hell, and yet not tumble in. And these are the men *that fall into mischief.*

This tenderness of heart being of so great price in the sight of God, we must expect it will not escape long the severe lashes of virulent spirits; but it will be difficult to persecute a thing so innocent before it be exposed, and therefore they advise themselves from *Amnon's* example, who first *defiled*, and then *reviled* his Sister *Tamar.*

A tender Conscience (saith this Compassionate Enquirer) *is nothing but either an ignorant or uninstructed mind, or a sickly, mi-*

melancholy, and superstitious understanding, which he might more concisely have described without this vast expense of words. *A tender Conscienced person is one that has a soft place in's Head*: or had he but spoke *in plain English*, as he did in the Definition of Conscience. He is *a most profound Coxcomb*.

They who preach this Doctrine *to the World*, might with the same labour, and almost equal honesty, preach God *out of the World*: for whoever would dethrone God from the heart, discovers but an impotent Ambition to pluck him down from his throne in Heaven: But when they have run through all their vain methods to excuse his soveraignty, God will maintain to himself an Authority in the Conscience.

Nay this will destroy *the Magistrates power* also in a while, for whose sake the Contrivance is pretended; for when subjects are once instructed so far to debauch conscience, that though we judge an action sinful, yet we may do it, it will lead to this easy inference, that though we judge the Magistrates Commands Lawful, yet we may disobey them: for as we say, when men have got a hole in their hearts, one concern will drop through after another without regret.

When the *Italians* would call any one *Fool* with an *Emphasis*, they say *He is a Christian!* Hence forwards when the Devil would shame his modester Servants from cowardise in sinning, he has a nickname for them, these are your *men of tender Consciences*! And that which has been *a Holy Engine* of Gods wisdom to secure from sin, shall now become the *Devils Machine* to slish raw novices in it.

That *a tender Conscience* is *a good Conscience*, has been hetherto presumed by all our Divines; and I never met with a Collect in the Liturgy of any Church that taught us to pray *from the great plague of a tender Conscience, Good Lord deliver us!* which yet if it be *so great a judgment*, we may presume they would have done. But the *Enquirer* is of another judgment, and perhaps may proselite us with his Reasons.

1. Reason. *Tenderness cannot be taken in the same Latitude with a good Conscience, every good man has such a tenderness as to be affraid of sin, and to decline the occasions of it*: If this argument has any strength in it, it must be because every *good man* is a Fool: But why I pray cannot a good, and a tender Conscience meet in every good man? Oh the Reason is this, *It would be too arrogant and presumptuous for those that plead the tenderness of their Consciences to suppose themselves the only men that make Conscience of what they do.* But if *a tender Conscience* be *a good Conscience*, it will be nevertheless good, because some unjustly pretend to it, or others unjustly revile it. Dissenters do not suppose themselves the only men that make a Conscience of what they do; It suffices them to enjoy the peace of their own without daring to judge other mens Consciences.

2. Reason: *Because* (says he) *Then the contrary to it must be a brawny Conscience.* Well! what hurt is there in that? *Soft and hard;*

hard; *tender*, *and callous*; *ſenſible* and *brawny*, have been oppoſed before this diſpute began: *a heart of ſtone* is oppoſed to *a heart of fleſh*, and would it not be a way of Reaſoning well-becoming a Rhethorician, to argue, *a heart of fleſh* cannot poſſibly be *a good heart*, the contrary to it then will be *a ſtony heart*. The whole argument ſtands thus: If a tender Conſcience be a good Conſcience, then the contrary to it muſt be a brawny or hard Conſcience; now aſſume. But a brawny or hard Conſcience cannot be contrary to a tender Conſcience, ergo. &c. He that has nothing elſe to do with his time, let him abuſe it in anſwering ſuch Syllogiſms.

Ay! but (ſays he) *this would be too contumelious to reproach all men but themſelves with*: very admirable! As if the notions of words, or things were to be taken from mens raſh applications of them to themſelves or others. *A tender Conſcience* would be *a good Conſcience*, though the *Enquirer* had the confidence to Monopolize all *Tenderneſs to himſelf*: And a brawny Conſcience will be an evil one, though he ſhould be ſo *contumelious* as to aſperſe all others but himſelf with it:

This way of Arguing is a ſhooe that will fit any mans foot, ſerve any mans occaſions, as will as the owners.

A *Tender Conſcience* cannot be an *ignorant mind*, for it would be too preſumptuous and Arrogant for thoſe that reproach it to account themſelves the only wiſe men on earth: And then the contrary to it muſt be an *inlightned mind*; and it would be too contumelious to reproach all the world for Fools but their own precious ſelves.

Uſe, Is the grand Maſter of words: He that will ſpeak as others ſpeak, muſt either underſtand as they do, or be content to be miſunderſtood: A Tender Conſcience amongſt us of the Populace, is Conſcience under that Office of warning us of the danger of ſin; it Adviſes us to take the ſafer ſide in things dubious, and rather avoid *the ſmoak* for fear of *the Fire*, then with *Empedocles* ruſh into the *ſmoak* and find our ruine.

But the beſt of our Entertainment is yet behind: for he will now read a very *Learned Lecture* to this *Tender Conſcience*: which in my weak judgment is monſtrouſly abſurd, ſeeing he ſuppoſes his *Auditors to be all Fools*. Men of *ignorant minds*, *or ſickly underſtandings*: The buſineſs lyes here, how a Tender Conſcience muſt be qualified, that it may enjoy it's *Priviledges*?

§. 1. *He that pleads for compaſſion upon the account of his weakneſs* (that is his Tenderneſs) *muſt be ſo ingenious as to ſubmit himſelf to Inſtruction*: And if *the Enquirer* muſt be *the Inſtructer*; He deſerves to wear *a Fools Coat* for his pains, for I would gladly learn what as *the firſt Lecture*; what is the Nice, and Critical difference between *a Tender*, and *a Compaſſionate Enquirer*?

There are two points they ſay of wiſdom, the *firſt* that we be able to *adviſe our ſelves*, the *ſecond*, that being Conſcious of our own inability, we be willing to ſubmit to the adviſe of others, wiſer

wiſer then our ſelves: But this tender Conſcience being ſuch a widgeon, it cannot be expected he ſhould be guilty of ſuch ingenuity.

§. 2. *He that pretends to tenderneſs of Conſcience, muſt make good his claim by being uniformly conſcientious.* The plain meaning whereof is this: That he that pretends to be a Fool, muſt equally maintain the Humour, and carry on the Allegory of folly all the days of his life; *otherwiſe* (as he wiſely obſerves) *it will be but Phariſaiſm!*

To prove which deep Point he inſtances in *David*; whoſe *Heart ſmote him when he cut of the Skirt of Sauls garment, but it would never have been called Tenderneſs of Conſcience in David, if at another time he ſhould have attempted the life of Saul.* And what he ſays is very true, If we take *Tenderneſs of Conſcience* in it's true and proper acceptation; but nothing *more Ridiculous*, nay *more dangerous*, ſhould we according to his New Notion, take *a Tender Conſcience* for *a weak underſtanding.*

I ask! Did *Davids* heart ſmite him when he cut of *Sauls* garment? Yes! But was it *out of Tenderneſs of Conſcience* that it ſmote him? why yes! The *Enquirer* has juſt now told you ſo, are you deaf? Ay! But is *a Tender Conſcience nothing but an ignorant or uninſtructed mind, a ſickly melancholy, or ſuperſtitious underſtanding?* why ſhould you be ſo importunate? *It can be nothing elſe*: The *Enquirer* has defined it ſo *in plain Engliſh*: Why then this is in plain Engliſh the Doctrine under which his Auditors muſt be prepared for their priviledges. *That David* being *a Tender hearted*, that is, *a Tender headed* Perſon, through the *Tenderneſs*, that is, the *ſlenderneſs* of his crazed intellectuals, coming under *the diſtinct Conſideration of Reflecting upon his own action*, in *a melancholy, and ſuperſtitious* qualme rebuked himſelf *for cutting of the Skirt of* Sauls *garment.*

But by his good favour this is too ſevere a Cenſure of that Holy Act of *David*, whoſe Tender Conſcience (after ſome ſurprizal) being recovered, and awakened, ſeverely ſchooled him that he durſt make ſo near an approach to *the Deſtroying, by the touching of the Lords Annointed.* But ſuch gloſſes he might find in ſome old pair of Bandeleers — Priſcæ veſtigia fraudis.

Thus the Jews out of ignorance crucified Chriſt. 3. Act. 17. But when Conſcience was well informed, and ſprinkled with that Blood which they had once ſhed; when Grace had applied that to their Hearts, which they raſhly imprecated upon their Heads, they were *pricked* in their Conſciences, *and cried out Men, and Brethren what ſhall we do?* It was ignorance that lead to that murder, but a Conſcience made Tender, and reflecting upon their own act, which cauſed them to *repent of, and turn from their ſin.* The Rule indeed is a moſt excellent one in it ſelf, though wickedly applied in this particular; *He that claims the Priviledges of a Tender Conſcience, muſt make good his claim by being uniformly Conſcientious.* For he that is *Tender* of eating a

black-pudding, and yet not tender of the blood of the Saints: he that ſcruples the Omiſſion of a Ceremony, though his weak Brother periſh by it, yet never ſcruples to bear falſe witneſs, nor to murder the reputation of another; he that is tender of *the Ceremonial Law of Man*, and yet makes no bonds of *the Moral Law of God*: muſt not be allowed to plead this Priviledge; Though any one may be allowed the priviledge of our Authors *tender Conſcience*, which is only this: That if he holds any Land *in Capite*, he ſhall be *begg'd for a Fool*.

§. 3. *He that is truly Tender, if he cannot do all that is Commanded, yet will do all he can. He that cannot bow at the Name of Jeſus, yet perhaps can ſtand up at the Creed.* But what now if this inſtance of his *Tenderneſs* be impertinent? I queſtion whether bowing *at the naming of Jeſus* be *Commanded*! However Diſſenters are excuſed by this Reaſon from *conforming to what they can*, unleſs it be matter of their ambition to be admitted in the Colledg of *all Fools*.

To do all we can to *no purpoſe*, is ſmall encouragement to the attempt: we are denied Communion with the Church *in all Ordinances*, unleſs we come up to *all the Terms* of Communion. Now ſince it's our apparent duty to live in the practiſe of *all Chriſts inſtitutions*, if we cannot enjoy them in one place upon Chriſts Terms, his Command, and tenderneſs to our own ſouls oblige us to ſeek out, where we may enjoy them better cheap.

§. 4. *He that cannot perform all that the Laws require of him, may forbear judging them that do, the man of a Tender Conſcience finds it enough to judge his own actions.* This is a moſt excellent Rule; and Diſſenters deſire no more liberty. Let them but judge of their own actions, and they leave all others *to ſtand, or fall to their own Maſters*. And it ſeems hard, if they may not be indulged this priviledge, ſince the ſilliеſt Creature that ever was is preſumed to have ſo much wit, as to *come out of a ſhower of Rain*, rather then *to be wet to the skin*.

§. 5. *The truly tender Conſcience* (that is, *the Fool* all this while) *will freely part with money*, nay of all the men in the world, there's none ſo free as he, for *a Fool and his money are ſoon parted*. Well! *But if he cannot conform to the Laws, he can pay the penalty*. I promiſe you that's a great Queſtion, whether he can or no. *Where nothing's to be had, the King muſt loſe his Right*. But if this be the grand *qualification* of a *Tender Conſcience* to be made *a Begger*, I wonder what his *Priviledge* can be, unleſs it be to ſucceed old *Clauſe*, the King of Beggers.

For his ſatisfaction; if the penalty be moderate, ſuch as I can pay without ruine to my ſelf and family, though I be not ſatisfyed in the juſtice of it, yet herein I may lawfully depart from my own Right, and ſhall eſteem it a great mercy if my coyn may compound for my Conſcience.

[3] Readers you have heard *the qualifications of a Tender Conſcience*, be but now Maſters of ſo much Patience as to ſit out *the Tri-*

Priviledges; and that laſt Scene will make you ample ſatisfaction.

( ) *Every private Chriſtian is bound in Charity, and compaſſion towards ſuch a Man, to deny himſelf of ſome part of his* Liberty *to gain him; that is, in thoſe things that are matter of no Law*: where you have firſt *a Bit*, and then *a knock*; or the fair Conceſſion, and the wary Revocation.

§. 1. The *Conceſſion*; Every *private Chriſtian is bound in Charity to ſuch a Man, to part with ſome of his Liberty to gain him*: wherein there are ſeveral things to be adviſed upon. 1. The *ſubject* of the Propoſition. *Every private Perſon.* 2. The *nature* of the obligation. *Bound in Charity, and compaſſion.* 3. The *matter* of the duty. *To deny himſelf of ſome part of his Liberty.* 4. The *end* to *gain him.* In few or none of which particulars can I arrive at any clear ſatisfaction.

1.] *Every private Perſon.* And are not all *publick Perſons* bound by the Law of God to *walk charitably*? not *to deſtroy ſouls*? I doubt we forget that God is here the Legiſlator, *with whom is no reſpect of Perſons.* Charity is the fulfilling of the Moral Law: And if any Perſon be ſo publick as not to be obliged by it, we muſt leave thoſe Commands, *Thou ſhalt do no Murther*; *Thou ſhalt not commit Adultery* to exerciſe the *ſmall fry*, and hamper the vulgar.

The Apoſtle Paul was *a publick Perſon*, and one as well qualified to diſcern, and impoſe things indifferent, as any that have made the faireſt pretences that way, and yet he Profeſſes with more then ordinary fervency. 1. Cor. 8. 13. That *he will eat no fleſh whilſt the world ſtands, leaſt he ſhould make his Brother to offend.* And who ſhall venture to make that the matter of an *Eccleſiaſtical Canon*, which the Apoſtle durſt not venture to practiſe? They that aſſume a *greater Authority*, had need give greater proof of *greater Charity*. And yet greater was the importance of *Fleſh* to the Health and life of Paul, then a *Ceremony* can poſſibly be to *the peace of the Church*. For. 1. Fleſh is *Diſjunctively* neceſſary to the health, and life of Man, that is, either fleſh or ſome other food; but neither this, nor that, *humane Ceremony* is neceſſary, either to the glory of God, the peace of the Church, or Decency, and order in the worſhip. The Church has ſerved God decently, lived peaceably, and glorified God eminently without them, and in his time may do ſo again. 2. *Fleſh* was a thing perfectly *indifferent in it ſelf*, and owned ſo by all that were well inſtructed in their Manumiſſion from the Moſaical ſervitude; but the more we are faithfully inſtructed in the Doctrine of Chriſtian Liberty, the more are we ſatisfied, that we are at Liberty from all other Ceremonies of men as well as from thoſe that were once of Divine Inſtitution.

2.] *Bound in Compaſſion, and Charity.* I am not well ſatisfied that *a Debt of mere Compaſſion, or free Charity* is all we owe our Brother in this caſe. However; we owe our God *a Debt of Juſtice*; It's he that ſays, *Deſtroy not him with thy meat for whom*

Christ dyed. 14. Rom. 15. And that there is no comparison between the Law that *enjoins Ceremonies*, and that Law that commands us *not to offend our Brother*, I thus prove: 1. The Law that *forbids scandal*, is *Negative*: but the Law that commands Ceremonies, is but *Affirmative*. Now *Gods own affirmative precepts* may have their *outward acts* suspended in some cases for some time; but *Negatives* admit of no relaxation; He that says *thou shalt not do*, says, *thou shalt never do*; unless dispensed with by a power equal to his that gave the Prohibition. 2. The Command of *not scandalizing* is purely *moral*, the heart, and life of the sixth Commandement; For he that says *thou shalt not Kill*, primarily intends I shall not *destroy the soul*: but the Command of Ceremonies but *positive*; And *positives* ought to give place to *Morals*: If there be any Truth in that Doctrine of the *Enquirers*: That *God lays little stress upon Circumstantials*: that his *own positive Laws* give place to *the Moral Law*: much more ought *Mans Ceremonial Law* give place to Gods Moral Law: *Thou shalt not Kill*. 3. The Command of not giving offence, because *Moral*, is therefore *perpetual*, but the Command of Ceremonies Temporary, and may be momentany, for the Church of *England*, 34. Art. Asserts a power in every National Church, *not only to ordain, but to change, and abolish Ceremonies*. 4. The Command of *not scandalizing the weak, not destroying the soul*, is in *Materiâ Necessariâ*, the thing it self is good in it self, and for it self, though no positive Command had interposed in the case; but Ceremonies have no other Goodness, but what is breath'd into them by the breath of Man, which if it were measured by the good effects, would be found very little. 5. The Command *not to offend*, is *unquestionably obligatory*, but that Command for Ceremonies is at best questionable whether it be so much as lawful. 6. The Command to avoid offence, has a direct and natural tendeney to beget and preserve Amity and unity amongst Christians; but the Command of Ceremonies apparently has occasion'd Divisions between Protestants, and Papists, between Protestants themselves, between those of the same Nations, and all Humane Terms of Church-communion necessarily produce the same bitter fruit. 7. The power of ordering the smallest matter in the Church, must conform to the Soveraign end of edification. 2. Cor. 13. 10. — *The power which the Lord hath given me for edification, and not Destruction*; But no power may suspend my duty of pleasing my Brother to his edification. 8. Supposing the worst: That it's only *a Debt of Charity* which my Brother may challenge of me, not to scandalize him; and *a Debt of justice* to Obey the Magistrate in this very case, yet the *Minims of justice* ought to vail to the *Magnalia* of Charity: As *the Command of a Father*, in lower instances, ought to yeeld to the preservation of my *Neighbours life*.

3] Some would except against *the matter* of his concession: [*to deny himself in some part of his Liberty*] what a *small some* that may be none knows: perhaps there's *no part* of his Li-

Liberty, which that duty may not Command.

4] I except lastly against his propounded end: *to please and gain him*: as not adæquat to that which the Command has in it's eye.

To *scandalize*, or *give offence*, may be taken either in a primary sense, and so it denotes *a culpable giving occasion to a Brother to sin*, or in a lower and secondary sense, for the *angering, and displeasing of a Brother*. This distinction well observed would untravel much confusion. which pesters our discourses.

1. If we compare the displeasing of *a private person*, with that of *a publick*, the latter is more *sinful*, and much more *dangerous*, for *the wrath of a King is like the roaring of a Lyon*.

2. To occasion culpably *a publick person* to sin, is more heinous, then to occasion the sin of *a private person*, because the sins of those in eminent places have such a fatal influence upon the peoples *pollution*, and the procurement of Gods displeasure.

3. But if we compare a scandal in the *primary* sense, with one in the *secondary*, then it's no measuring cast, whether it be more eligible to *displease* the one, or destroy the other: Nor can there be sin in *displeasing* one, when I cannot otherwise please, but by destroying the other: for though my own folly may possibly so ensnare me; yet God never puts me under such Circumstances, that I shall be necessitated to sin:

§. 2. You have heard his fair *concession*, now take his *Limitation* along with you: *That is* (says he) *in those things that are matters of no Law, but left free*, and *undeterminate, there the Rule of the Apostle takes place*. 15. Rom. 1. 2. *We that are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please our selves*: And, *let every one of us please his Neighbour for his good to edification*, and we will add. 14. Rom: 13. *Let no man put a stumbling block, or an occasion to fall in his Brothers way*. v. 15. *Destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ dyed*. v. 19. *Let us follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another*. v. 20. *for meat Destroy not the work of God*.

This is the last retreat of these Gentlemen: Hether they retrire as to their *Triary*, and strong Reserves. You ought *to bear the infirmities of the weak*, to *edify him* heavenwards, not *to murder his soul*, till a Law be made *to the contrary*, you are *bound in Charity, and compassion* to such a one, till you receive further Orders. and then you must be *savage, and barbarous*: But his Reasons follow.

1. Reason: because *we may not do evil that good may come*: The sinews of which Reason lye in a supposition: that to *omit a Ceremony*, is an evil thing, compared with *the saving of a soul*. This General Rule may be applied that other way: we must *not do evil that Good may come*; and therefore may not draw *a poor Brother into sin, that*

some good may come by it; and the rather, if we consider *what good* comes by it. As the saving my self *a pecuniary mulct*; or Recognizing, *the Magistrates power to Command*; which may be done, and is so in many ways, wherein the scandal of another is not concern'd; And if I should transgress a Ceremony, or so, for the saving of a soul, we may Lawfully presume upon *the general* will of the Legislator, that *no positive Command* of his should be so rigorously insisted on, when it would destroy a greater good.

2. Reason: *We must not break the Laws of God or man out of an* humour of complaisance *to a Brother*: Ans: To discharge a weighty duty, to avoid the scandalizing of a Brother, to *walk charitably*: which the *Enquirer* p. 137. (when he had occasion to magnify Charity) tells us *is an essential part of Religion*: ought not to be put of with a frothy Droll, as if it were nothing but the humour of Complaisance.

The Apostle whose head understood the speculation, and whose heart entertained the love of this Doctrine much better then himself, has taught us other things: That *to sin against the Brethren, is to sin against Christ*, 1 Cor. 8. 12. 'Tis to *destroy with our meats* (indifferent things) *him for whom Christ dyed*. 14. Rom. 15. And if these be matters of *humour, and complaisance*, and we should venture a Ceremony for them, it would be but to stake one Complement against another.

3. Reason: *In those times* (says he) *the Magistrate being Pagan, took no care of the Church, nor had passed any Laws concerning the management of the Christian Religion: And so Christians had a great deal of scope, and room for mutual condescension. — But the case is quite otherwise when there's a Law in being*, &c.

Really, the Pagan Magistrate was very much overseen, unless perhaps he knew nothing less or more of his Authority over things indifferent; and then the Apostles must needs be to blame, who never inform'd him of that Power over the Church, wherewith Christ had entrusted him; And above all St. *Paul* was utterly inexcusable, having so inviting an opportunity to do it in: Being so long at *Rome*, having friends *in Cæsars Household*, and this *in Quinquennio Neronis*, when the Lion was treatable and approachable; Besides this must have obliged him to entertain better thoughts of Christians, and Christianity, and engaged him to protect, and defend it, when it lay so entirely at his devoir. The *Enquirer* instructed us, p. 144. that *such a Society as a Church*, could never *be conserved without some Rites or other*, nor *any publick Worship be performed if all Ceremonies, and Circumstances such as of time, place, persons, and the like, be left indefinite, and undetermined*. He has told us since, that the power of Determining and Defining these things ly's in *our Governours who understand the Civil Policy*. p. 151. And now he tells us, That *in those* (primitive) *times the Magistrate had passed no Laws concerning the manage of the Christian Religion*: so that it was impossible that either *Church Government* should

be

be Lawfully administred, or *publick Worship* duely performed, because the Apostles were negligent in informing the Emperour of his power, or he careless in performing his duty.

I wonder that amongst all the Apocryphal Epistles of *Christ* to *Agebarus*, or *Paul* to *Seneca*, we meet with none of the Apostles to *Nero*.

That whereas their Lord and Master had left them in great hast, and either through the hurry of business had forgotten, or littlemind of the things had neglected to settle his Churches, nor had passed any Laws concerning the manage of Religion, for want of which politick constitutions they were in a lamentable confusion, the worship of God lying at sixes, and sevens, the Government of the Church meer Anarchy, none had power to Command, none were obliged to obey, every one did that which was right in his own eyes; none had power to impose, or compel the rest to submit to such Terms of Communion as were necessary, besides these few and plain ones *appointed by Christ himself; And forasmuch as they were altogether by the ears about indifferent things, and they had no Rules in their Law-Books to determine these intricate matters;*

They do therefore humbly beseech his Imperial Majesty, that he would Review and Revise their Religion, and add such other mystical Ceremonies, significant of Gospel grace, wherewith his well-known piety could not but be intimately acquainted; and that he would take speedy and effectual care with these vexatious Tender Consciences, *who scrupled eating of meats, because once prohibited by the Law of Moses, and straightly charge, and Command that none should gratify them in their weakness; and take such other, and further order about their Religion, as he in his Royal wisdom, from time to time, and at all times hereafter should judge meet, and expedient.*

And his Petitioners shall humbly Pray, &c.

But to satisfy that Assertion, I shall offer further these particulars.

1. It cannot appear that the Roman Emperours had any such Commission as is supposed to make that *no duty*, which God had made *a duty*. To make it *no sin to give offence*, which otherwise had been *a sin*: nor to add New Terms of Communion, or to shut out of the Church those whom the fundamental Laws of Christ would receive.

2. This principle of his Reflects most scandalously upon the greatest Temporal Mercy which God ever vouchsafed his Churches; I mean *the Christian Magistrate*: for it implies, that the condition of Christians was much more easy under *the Pagan*, then under *the Christian Magistrate*. *Then* (says he) *the Christians had a great deal of scope, and room for mutual condescension*: but now they are crowded up by restrictions. Then the Worship of God was *not clog'd* with needless Ceremonies, but now it's incumbred with *New Terms* of Communion. I might then have relieved a weak Conscience. *But the case is quite otherwise* (says he) *now there's a Law in being.* Then I might have used my liberty in indifferent things, and only be restrained

by *Prudence*, *and Charity*, but now I am debarred of it, by *the will of Authority*: This I say is a scandalous Reflexion: For God has promised Christian Princes as *Nursing Fathers* to the Gospel-Church, to secure and protect them, and the *Enquirer* makes them *Step-fathers*, tempting us to think, that we have got no such great Bargain by the change.

3. It's clear that the Apostles had as much power to order the meer Circumstances of worship, and Church-government, as was needful to their exercise, and actual performance, or else all their determinations were sinful.

(2) The next priviledge of this tender Conscience is: That *it becomes the Magistrate so far to consider the satisfaction of peoples minds, (as well as the safety, and peace of his Dominions) as not to make those things the matter of his Laws, which he foresees mens weakness will make them boggle at.* This is his *Concession*: wherein he needed not have been so *Timorous*. For when the Magistrate is settling *the Civil peace* of his Dominions, he needs not concern himself, whether the people will skew, or no. But as if he had been affraid, he had conceded too far, he wisely limits the concession, *As unless there be weighty Reasons on the other hand to counterballance that consideration*; And they must be *weighty Reasons indeed*, that will counterballance the *edification and Salvation* of *weak, yet sincere* Christians; that will counterballance *the peace, and safety of his Dominions*; Indifferent things will hardly weigh against these: but what are those ponderous things that will make the scales even against these? why. 1. *Such things, which* (though some scruple) *are necessary to Government*: yes, by all means; when things *necessary to Government* are put in the ballance, with *the peace and safety of his Dominions*, they ought to turn the beam: but this is freely granted, that if mens scruples would overturn Government, they must scruple on, at their own peril: But now we are ready to join issue with him upon this point: That the things scrupled are neither *necessary*, or any ways advantageous to the *Being, well-being*, or *Glorious being* of this, or any Government: *The Roman Empire* was in its greatest Glory, at its highest pitch, when the Apostles Baptized *without the sign of the Cross*, and preached *without the Holy Garment*: The Christian Religion, naked, and plain as Christ left it, had not the least evil, or malignant influence upon the peace of that Empire; Though it was the Policy of its enemies then, to clap all the Commotions that arose upon other accounts, upon the back of the Christian Doctrine; It was the popular cry: *These are the men that have turned the world upside down.* And when the Judgments of God broke out upon them for their persecutions, still to clamour: *Tollite Impios: Christianos ad Leones! Away with such Fellows, 't is not fit they live a day!* Nay it's evident that many Nations have prospered both in war and peace, by land and sea, who never knew the Ceremonies, and none the better for them; 2. *Such things which are grateful to the greater or more considerable part of the subjects*: Those are such things which *counterballance tender Consciences, and the peace and*

and safety of his Dominions. I suspect the *Enquirer* to be a raw Statesman, as well as a crude Casuist: what would he have a Prince *destroy one half* of his subjects to *gratify the other half?* The Apostle has offered a rational expedient, that the one may be *gratified*, and yet the other *not destroyed*. 14. Romans. 3. *Let not him that eateth, despise him that eateth not: And let not him that eateth not, judge him that eateth.* They to whom Ceremonies are so *grateful sawce*, may have their fill of them, and must they needs compel *squeamish stomachs* to feed on *the same Dish?* The gratefulness of Ceremonies to some mens fancies, is no solid Reason, why *a considerable*, though *not the more considerable* part, should be undone, tempted to sin, deprived of Communion in what they have a clear right by the Constitutions of the Gospel.

Nor are *the measures of Considerableness*, to be taken from outward advantages that such a one is Rich, a Dignitary, a Canon, a Prebend, a Dean, an Arch-Deacon, Chancellour, Bishop or Arch-Bishop, for he that is *most inconsiderable* in these respects, is *too considerable* to be ruined either in his temporal, or Spiritual concerns for a Ceremony.

And when all is done, it's a question whether the Ceremonies are *so grateful* to the *greater and more considerable part?* many learned and pious Ministers, many sincere and sober Christians make a rubbing-shift to get them down, accounting them *tolerable*, though not *eligible*; to these they are *not grateful*, but as *a burden* of which they cannot fairly discharge themselves, may be *grateful*; and leave but them at Liberty, and it will soon be visible, that the matters of our differences are not grateful either to the *greater*, or *more Considerable part* of the Nation.

(3) *It becomes the Magistrate* (says he) *who governs Men not Beasts, to afford means of instruction, and competent time for these instructions to take place.* I am glad however, to hear that *Subjects* are *not Beasts*, but *Men*: the rather, because he told us just before, *That it is the duty of a good Magistrate to drive as* the Cattle *can go.* But for answer. 1. If there must be *time afforded for instructions to take place:* Then such *Competent time* must be allowed to *every generation*, for *New days* will produce the *same doubts*. It was a true observation of a learned Person: that *leave English Men to their English Bibles, and there will a new off-spring arise in every Age that will have the same apprehensions about these matters*, that Non-Conformists *now have.* 2. The *time of these instructions*, that it may be competent to work upon our minds, will be a Considerable Circumstance. I have read of one who being asked, *What God was?* Desired a *days time* to consider of that important question: and when that was expired, he desired two, then four, still doubling his time, as he had doubled his diligence in his study of the Point: I am verily perswaded the more impartially, and sedulously any one shall examine the matters in Controversy, the more Reason he will find to crave more time for his satisfaction; and if he arrives not at *a Plerophory that* the things are *sinful*, he shall never be able to reach *a full assurance* that

they are *Lawful*: But yet time to consider will be acceptable; As he that undertook to make *an Asse speak*, in time; thought himselfe pretty secure, notwithstanding the impossibility of his undertaking; because *he* might dye, *the Asse* dye, or *his Enemies* dye, in the interval. 3. *The means* of Instruction are to be considered, that apt *mediums* be used for *conviction*; for if Scripture, and plain Deductions from thence, if Reason, and the practise of the Apostolical Churches are not produced for our satisfaction, a few scraps, and shreds, old ends, and fragments, out of *Livie*, *Tacitus*, and *Cato*, will never do it. 4. And the persons who are to instruct us, are no less material. They must be equal, and unbyassed persons, who are not engaged by preferments, Dignities and great Reveneus to uphold an interest; It must not be such whose wit, and Rhethorick make a flutter in the aire without Reason, that will probably convince Gainsayers, and therefore we Humbly beg that he may be instructed from the word of God, the practise of the purest and primo primitive times, and the instruction managed from the writings of the first Reformers of the Church of *England*. Till this instruction be given: We hope, and pray (as he expresses it) there may be *a suspension of Rigorous executions*.

What *now if after all this the people will not be instructed?* (And what if after all this, and a great deal more to as little purpose, they have no Reason to alter their judgment) Why then there's no way but one with our *Enquirer*. — *I see no obligation upon the Magistrate either to forbear to make, or execute such Laws as he apprehends for the good of his Government.* No more do I neither: only hope that he will *not apprehend* penal statutes, made upon the account of Ceremonies with their execution, (or rigorous execution) will be for the glory of God, the peace of the Church, or the good of his Government, though that was our Authors *insinuation*; And thus we have the short, and the long of *the compassionate Enquirer*.

I must for a conclusion entreat the Reader to Recollect himself, and remember where abouts *his lesson* is. In Part. 2. Ch. 2. He had mentioned *three ways for the cure of Church Divisions*. The first *Toleration*, the second *Comprehension*, but these were either *impracticable*, or *Remedies worse then the disease* it seems, something or other amiss in them that turned his stomack at them: At last he fixed upon a third method, and that was this of *Instruction*: under which course of Physick we have been disciplined all this while: strange Chimærical Inconveniences we have heard to be in *separation*: How *very little stress God lays upon his own* positive institutions: what an imaginary Name *Christian Liberty* is; what a silly Ridiculous thing *a Tender Conscience* is; what a transcendent Power Christ has entrusted the Magistrate with, to make what Terms of Christian Cummunion he pleases, if not *expressly prohibited* in Gods word. In these things we have been indoctrinated without reasonable proof, and we are, or have Reason to be as far from satisfaction as we were

were before, and somewhat further: Why then have amongst you my Masters! — *I can see no Obligation* — Well! It's no great matter whether you can or no! If Princes saw with your *Clerical* eyes, that can see nothing but Ceremony; If they should handle Dissenters with your rough *Esaus* hands, lined with the down of *Porcupine*; did they hear with your ears which chime to the Musick of the Cathedral, I perceive it would go very hard with these poor wretches.

Many Clergy-men measure the Wisdom, Grace, Mercy, Tenderness, and Bounty of Princes to their Subjects, by their own narrow, and incapable hearts; Thus when one told *Alexander*, that his bounty was too large to bestow upon a subject; He answer'd; Tell not me what's meet for him *to Receive*, but what's fit for *Alexander* to *give*: Princes are called *Gods*, and they then most eminently answer *their Names*, when they imitate him who Commands the Sun impartially to shed abroad his beams upon the habitable world, not taking the proportions of his Goodness to his Creatures, from *the malice, and envy* of some, or the little merits of others.

The Story of *Augustus Cæsar* is as remarkable as common: *Vedius Pollio* had once invited this Emperour to a Treat; whilst they were in the Gallery, comes in a poor Slave, with *death* in his face, and *Hope* in his hast, cast himself at the Emperours feet, and humbly begs, he might suffer a less cruel death, then his Patron *Pollio* had doomed him to: *Augustus* was surprized, and upon enquiry into the matter, understands, that this Boy had accidentally broken some of his Masters *Chrystal Glasses*, wherein he greatly delighted, for which fact his furious Master had inhumanely condemned him to be thrown into a Pond, there to be devoured by the *Canibal Lampreys*: And this was the Reason of his so confident Application, to the grace of Soveraign Majesty: *Augustus* transported with the novelty of so Barbarous punishment, commanded the rest of the Glasses to be broken, and the Fish-pond to be filled up: That there might either be no occasion for such passion, or not the means to execute it.

Let therefore the *Enquirer* know, who with his smooth *Prælatical Charity* has given up Dissenters to *the Rods and Axes*, that they will Honour and obey the King, under all those penalties which it shall please his wisdom to inflict; And if they cannot be so serviceable in well-doing, will endeavour to suffer for well-doing, with a heart so submissive, and a conversation so inoffensive, that shall make their enemies more repine at the Glory of their sufferings, then the eye-sore of their indulgence;

Nor yet dare they despair of the clemency of their Soveraign, who having suffered hard things in his own sacred person, has learnt to pitty them who do suffer: But if this *Compassionate Enquiry* be all the *instruction* they must expect for their *Satisfaction*, the Non-conformists may have Reason to say, they are *ill fed, and worse taught*.

CHAP. IX.

Wherein the *Enquirers* insinuated Detractions are refelled, some little Artifices discovered, *Calvin* vindicated, and the whole concluded.

Detraction differs from *Contumely*, just as *Theft* from *Robbery by the Highway*.

The *Slaunderer* is but a *Pickpoket*; the *Reviler* a *Padder*: the one can dexterously do the feat, and carry of his prize with a cast of cleanly conveyance, but the foulmouth'd *Rayler* attaeques the repute of the innocent *Vi, & Armis*, and pleads his *Commission to plunder*.

The *Serious Enquirer*, in some of his former Chapters, has with *downright Obloquy* assaulted the credit of Dissenters, but in this he proceeds more discreetly, undermining their Reputations by *oblique insinuations* and *indirect suggestions*: whereby he has gained this singular advantage, that whilst he lays before the Malicious sufficient matter to feed, and furnish their malice, yet lyes close under the covert of this excuse, that he affirms nothing positively, at once taking from the *aggrieved party* all possibility *of just defence*, and sheltring himself under the Politick plea of not being Dogmatical.

The design of all which, (as of his whole elaborate discourse) he could not more fully instruct us in, then in those few words of his, pag. 221. *It was an effectual course* Haman *took*. Esth. 3. 8. *When he designing to ruine the whole Church of the Jews, first undermines the Reputation of their Profession, delates their Religion as not fit for the Protection of the Prince, and that it did contain Laws contrary to all people, and that they would not obey the Kings Laws.* So solemn and sacred is that practise *to love the Treason, and hate the Traytor, to imitate the Policy, and yet decry the Politician.* But sure our *Enquirer* is quite out in one thing; for though *Haman's* Policy was *subtle*, yet it proved not *effectual*, unless he account a pair of *Gallows* such great *success*: and therefore I hope the *Enquirer* will accept it as a *specimen* of my Charity, if I pray that he may never take *an effectual course*. Examples indeed are numerous, and obvious which prove that wicked Counsels have most perniciously recoiled upon their Authors; and *Phalaris* (in this one thing most just) taught *Perillus* the sweetness of his own *Brazen Bull*, by giving the Artificer the first *handsale* of his *ingenious contrivance*.

— Nec lex est justior ulla,
Quam necis Artifices arte perire sua.

§. 1. Now

§. 1. Now his first *insinuation* is, that the N. C. stand out only upon *a Point of Honour*.

I cannot see (says he) *what should be able to perpetuate our Distractions, unless it be a point of Honour, that some men think themselves obliged to persevere, because they have begun:* which sly *Method of Detraction*, as it may *safely be contemned* by the innocent, so as *easily retorted* by the confident: for others perhaps *cannot see what should be able to perpetuate their persecutions, unless it be a point of Honour that some men think themselves obliged to persevere in their rigorous impositions, because they have begun, and had rather justify an errour, then have it thought they have been in one so long*: It's a most unrighteous procedure to charge any man with base and unworthy designs, further then pregnant overtures will justify such a charge, and yet A. B. *Whitgifts* has given the world too great occasion for such a jealousy, that it was *a Point of honour* that obstructed a Reformation, when his great Argument, to defeat the *Pious intention of the Parliament*, was, that it would *tend to the slaunder of the Church, as having hetherto maintained an errour*. Nay I have read in the *Grand Debate* Sect. 6. That the Reverend Prelates authorized to Reform the Liturgy, insist upon this as one Reason of their non-condescension to more alterations: That *it would be a virtual Confession, that the Liturgy was an intolerable burden to tender Consciences*.

But a few considerations would rout a Legion of such ungrounded suggestions.

As. 1. That the applause of *inconsiderable persons* must needs be very *inconsiderable*, and that credit *small*, which is gained amongst those who are of *small credit* in the World. Ad 2ly, That the temptation lyes visibly *on the other side*: He that would drive a gainful Trade for *Credit, and Honour*, must settle his Factory where such Commodities are native, and staple: He may gape for Dignities, and Honours till he is *Chap fallen*, whose Conscience shall cast his lot amongst the Dissenters, and when he has Angled all day, may come home with a Diverbe, *I have fisht fair, and caught a Frog*. And. 3. Sure no wise man would purchase *honourable scars*, with *mortal wounds*; not incur the displeasure of *Armed power*, only to wear the Cognizance of fooliſh valour in *Black, and Blew*. 'Tis a slender alleviation of those loads of reproach which they feel, besides those greater severities which they may fear, to wear *a Feather in their Caps*, and the *airy plume of popular applause*. Nay. 4. Let this Gentleman make it his own case, and learn to judge more moderately: Suppose it were enacted by Law, That to *practise the Ceremonies* should be punisht with suspension *ab officio, & beneficio*, would he upon *a point of Honour* espouse their quarrel? or would the waxen wings of Fame support his courage under those penalties? Why then should he judge that corruption co lodge in the breast of another, which he would not harbour in his own?

And

And yet I must needs say, that the good name, and *moderate Repute* of every *Christian*, much more of every *Minister of the Gospel*, ought to be of that value to him, as not to prostitute it to every *three half penny temptation*, nor to render it cheap by Levity, and inconstancy, when no more cogent Reasons are offer'd for an alteration, then *meer will, and pleasure*: nor has any one thing more debased the honour of Christianity, nor weakened the success of the Ministry, then that some of those who wear those glorious Liveries, have either sullied them in the dirt, or turned them *wrong side outwards*, wheeling about like Weathercocks, with the smallest breath of flattering preferments, or however, with the more violent gusts of threatned persecutions.

A good man is τετράγωνος, one of a cubical figure, that falls upon his *Basis* of Conscience, which way soever the providence of God shall throw him; though some mens practise would make us believe, that the plain English of that hard word is *to fall on his legs like a Cat*: which an old hyperbolical proverbe tells us, will wriggle her self into her true perpendicular, though shot out of a Canons mouth.

Such persons, I confess, do not want their specious arguments, to prove themselves *constant*, under the greatest demonstrations of *inconstancy*. For (say they) we have *setled our ultimate end*, and *fixed our main design*, which is to assecurate our Revenews, our ease, our splendour. and if the *Terms* of enjoying them vary, yet we never vary from the ecliptick line of preferments; let contingencies appear in multiform shapes, we can press all Accidents into the service of our *unum necessarium*. Such was that Quadrangular Doctor, a zealous Protestant in *Edw.* 6th dayes, a Papist in Q. *Maries*, and upon the advancement of *Qu Elix.* faced about, and read the Service in English: *O come let us sing a new Song!* Thus let the exteriour face of Religion receive more shapes then Proteus, yet he abides constant to his principles, and resolves to continue *Vicar of Bray*.

Yet that we may not prove sturdy Okes, but flexible Willows, the *Enquirer* has two waighty things to say to us.

(1) *That it's no real dishonour, but a manly generosity, and a Christian virtue to change our minds upon mature deliberation, and the evidence of better Reason.* Very orthodox! I hope then he will allow it to be *a manly generosity, and a Christian virtue* to keep our *minds unchanged*, to assert our own convictions, till those *evidences of better reason* shall appear which may change them, and that it would be *a childish pusillanimity*, to change *our practise*, till *better reason* shall oblige us to change *our minds*: but I am fearful, though upon *mature deliberation* we fix our minds according to the dictates of the best reason we can get, yet shall we not avoid trouble till we conform them to *the publick reason*. But (says he) *the very temper which our Saviour requires of his Disciples, and which is the great preparatory disposition to the en-*

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pertainment of Christianity, especially consists in a simplicity of mind, and an indifferency to comply with whatsoever shall best recommend it self to our faculties. Well! Dissenters say they have already *complied with that which has best recommended it self to their faculties*, shall they be secured from vexation upon such complyance? They resolve never to be *Non-conformists to their own faculties*! Still I doubt that they who have invented *a publick wisdom, a publick reason, a publick* Conscience, will set their wits on work once more to contrive *a publick faculty* wherein those *publick powers* may reside, for it's but congruous that the *publick Treasure* should be deposited in *a publick Treasury.*

I am all this while at a loss where our *Saviour* has required this same *indifferency*, unless perhaps where he says, *He that will be my Disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.* An indifferency of spirit towards *every thing* is an excellent preparatory towards *just nothing.* And the best temper (it seems) to entertain the *Christian Religion*, is to be of *no Religion.* As the eye is the better prepar'd to receive the species of *all Colours*, because it's of *none*; and the imaginary *first matter* is therefore capable of *all forms*, because it's tinctur'd with *no form.*

Such has been the Policy of our *Romish Emissaries*; To endeavour to reduce the dissenting world to *Atheism*, that they might be prepared to receive the impressions of their *Catholicism*; and upon this Maxime was the Counsel founded their great *Boverius* gave to a greater person fortified with more grace then to take it. *Ut quoniam vera Religio tibi inquirenda est, antequam ad eam investigandam accedas, omnem prius Religionem suspectam habeas, lubeatque tamdiu à Protestantium Fide, & Religione animum, & voluntatem suspendere quamdiu in veri investigatione versaris.* „ That seeing your Majesty is now going to „ search for the true Religion, before you fall upon the work, „ you would first suspect every Religion: and that you would be „ pleased so long to suspend your assent, and confent to the „ Faith, and Religion of the Protestants, as you are engaged „ in the disquisition of the Truth.

(2) The second thing he has to say to us is, *That the Honour of our Religion is of more value then our personal Reputation.* Still orthodox! but the *Honour of Religion* is very little secured by the Professors adapting themselves to that which has the vogue, and carries no other advantage but that of power to second, and back it: Christianity will shine with it's own native beams, without sinful complyances: Nor need we fear but that Christian Magistrates will cast a benign aspect upon the *Religious*, though the *Religion* was never of their Composure: They like it the better, because their *Saviour* made it, and not they: And how high soever God has set them above their subjects, it's their greatest glory to stoop as low to a Redeemer, as the meanest Peasant. Christianity in it's naked simplicity, and most modest attire disturbes no forms of Government, but is admirably

rably suited by the wisdom of Christ to all modes of Civil Policy: And if we may speak according to the *best evidence of the reason*, and own that which *recommends it self to our faculties*, a Monarch may be as absolute without the Ceremonies, and other unnecessary Additions, as with them:

§. 2. A second insinuation is, That Non-conformists are *turbulent, unpersuadable, ungovernable*; That their principles have a malignant influence upon Government; And for the more dexterous management of this suspicion he tells us, *That it's a great blot in the writings of Calvin, that after he had discoursed rarely well of the power of Princes, and the duty of Subjects, he undoes all again with an unhappy exception in these words: De privatis hominibus semper loquor.* I see if Calvin has but *one blot*, the *Enquirer* will hit it; so quicksighted he is, that none must hope to take him with *a why not?* I meet indeed with an Eagle-eyed Jesuite, who to palliate the villanies of their own Society, would gladly pick a hole in *Calvins* Coat, but the Reverend, and Protestant Bishop *Bilson* roundly takes him up thus: *Calvin is so well known to those that be learned, and wist for his great pains, and good labours in the Church of God, that a few snarling Fryers cannot impeach his good Name, though you never so wretchedly pervert his words.* And yet the Bishops book came forth *cum Privilegio*, and was dedicated to *Q. Elizabeth*, by one very tender in the point of Supremacy, and Prerogative. Dialog. p. 509. But *Calvins* greatest crime was his Syncretism with the *Doctrine of the Church*, and not his enmity to *the Civil Government*. And because a shred cut of from the whole piece of his Discourse may easily through ignorance be misconstrued, or through malice misrepresented to his prejudice, I shall present his words at large to the Reader. Institut. lib. 4. cap. 20. parag. 31.

„Nobis autem interim summoperè cavendum, ne illam ple-
„nam venerandæ Majestatis Magistratuum authoritatem, quam
„Deus gravissimis edictis sanxit, (Etiamsi apud indignissimos
„residеat, & qui eam suâ nequitiâ, quantum in se est pollu-
„ant) spernamus, aut violemus: Neque enim, si ultio Domi-
„ni, est effrænatæ dominationis correctio, ideo protinùs
„nobis demandatam arbitremur; quibus nullum aliud quam
„parendi. & patiendi, datum est Mandatum. De privatis
„hominibus semper loquor; Nam siqui nunc sint populares
„Magistratus ad moderandam Regum Libidinem constituti
„(quales olim erant qui Lacedæmoniis Regibus oppositi
„erant, Ephori; aut Romanis Consulibus, Tribuni plebis;
„aut Athenienſium Senatui, Demarchi; & quâ etiam fortè
„potestate, ut nunc res habent sunguntur in singulis regnis
„tres Ordines, quum primarios conventùs peragunt) adeo
„illos, ferocienti Regum Licentiæ pro officio intercedere

non

„non veto; ut ſi, Regibus impotenter graſſantibus, & humili „plebeculæ inſultantibus, conniveant, eorum diſſimulatio„nem neſariâ perfidiâ non carere, affirmem; quâ populi Liber„tatem cujus ſe Dei ordinatione tutores poſitos, norunt, frau„dulenter produnt.

I think we may ſafely venture to tranſlate them: *In the mean while we ought ſtudiouſly to beware that we neither deſpiſe, nor oppoſe the Authority of Magiſtrates, ſo full of Dread and Majeſty, which God himſelf has eſtabliſhed by moſt ſevere Decrees. (although poſſibly it ſhould reſide in perſons moſt unworthy; and ſuch as by their perſonal wickedneſs do defile it, as much as in them lyes.) For though the Divine vengeance be the Reſtrainer of unbridled Empire, yet muſt we not thence imagine that the Management thereof is committed to us. I ſpeak always of private perſons: For if there ſhould be any ſuch popular Magiſtrates Conſtituted to Moderate the Arbitrarineſs of Princes, (ſuch as of old were the* Ephori, *who ballanced the* Lacedæmonian Kings. *The* Tribunes of the people, *who moderated the* Roman Conſuls, *or the* Demarchi, *who were the ſame to the* Senate of Athens; *And which power (as things go now) the three Eſtates in each Kingdom, when they are convened in full Parliament, do peradventure enjoy. I am ſo far from forbidding them to intercede according to their duty, with the furious Licentiouſneſs of Kings, that if they ſhall connive at them when they paſſionately horroſſe, and trample upon the poor Comonalty, I may affirm that their ſilence cannot be excuſed of ſinful breach of truſt, ſeing they falſly betray the peoples Liberty, whereof they knew themſelves to be the Guardians by Gods inſtitution.* Reader! Theſe are thoſe diſmal lines which have raiſed the clamour againſt poor *Calvin*, wherein thou wilt obſerve theſe particulars. 1. That *private perſons* have no warrant from God to reſtrain the exorbitances of Governours, but are left to the only Remedy *parendi, & patiendi*, of ſubmiſſion, and patience. 2. Yet he ſuppoſes that ſome Magiſtrates may poſſibly have a larger power then *bare ſuffering, or paſſive obedience.* 3. This power which he ſuppoſes may poſſibly be entruſted with them, is but *ferocienti Regum licentiæ pro officio intercedere*: dutifully to intercede with the Prince to redreſs grievances, humbly to repreſent the invaſions made upon propriety, or perhaps (if called) to counſel and adviſe a Redreſſe: which is a power far greater then that of bare ſuffering, and enduring the evil, and yet infinitely ſhort of Rebellion againſt depoſing, baniſhing, or murdering Princes. 4. This is only upon a ſuppoſition that there be ſuch perſons ſo qualified, and entruſted by *the conſtitution of* [illegible] *Government*, and known Laws of the Land, *ſi qui ſint populares Magiſtratus Conſtituti.* Such he ſuppoſes indeed the *Ephori* at *Lacedæmon*, the *Tribunes* at *Rome*, the

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Demarchi & *Athens* to have been; but he's not sure, 'tis but *a peradventure*, there were any such in his time, *quâ etiam fortè potestate (ut nunc res habent) fungnuntur in singulis Regnis tres ordines.* For he knew pretty well how their own little Commonwealth at Geneva was Governed, but the Models of France, Spain, and other Soveraign Monarchies he had but a guess at; he had heard perhaps of *Les Etats Generaux* in France, but he was not very certain whether they had any such *interceding Authority*, or no; however or whatsoever it was, it could not be exerted but in *full Convention of the Estates in a general Dyet.* Cùm *primarios Conventûs peragunt*, and then was the time to petition, to make addresses in a submissive way for the redress of grievances. And 5. the guilt he charges upon these popular Magistrates for betraying their trust, arises from this alone, that they *connived at the miserable harassings of the Comonalty*, they took no notice at all of the invasions upon the Subjects Rights, and proprietles: which they might have done, and never have mingled heaven and earth together with civil broyles. And what can an ordinary eye espy hence, that should justifiy the *Enquirers* out-cry *a passage* (says he) *of that ill Aspect upon Government, that it is suspected by some, and not altogether without cause, that most of the Confusions of Kingdoms, that have happen'd since, and especially the troubles of this Nation, have received encouragement, if not taken rise from hence.*

If this *Enquirer* (or any other) has formerly contributed to the confusions and troubles of this, or any other Nation, and received encouragement from this place of *Calvin*, he ought first to be deeply humbled before God, that he should draw such desperate conclusions as those of Rebellion out of an innocent sentence, and give more essential proofs, and signal marks of repentance, then accepting a benefice of three or four hundred *per annum*; and secondly, be ashamed that he ventur'd to read *Calvin*, before he could well construe a piece of plain Latin, for I cannot understand that *Calvin*, though he was bound to write true Latin, was also bound to help every one to a construing book; no no, God obliged to prevent all the evil consequences which an evil heart, and base lusts might draw out of the most inoffensive expressions.

He that will give scope to suspicions, may easily conjecture where the *Enquirer* might drink in those principles which have such an ill aspect upon Government; he needed not have travelled to the *Lake Lemane*; his own incomparable *Hugo* could have furnisht him with *Maximes* of that Tendency: *Ignatius Loyola* himself might have been Scholler to such a Master: I shall refer the Reader only to his famous piece *de Jure Belli, & Pacis.* Lib. 1. Cap. 4. §. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. A place containing many *passages of that ill aspect upon Government, that it's suspected by some, and upon good grounds that most of the Civil Wars which have happen'd since in Europe, have received encouragement, if not taken rise from thence*: Let him try if he can find in Calvin,

such

such a passage as this: *Potest Rex etiam suam Imperii partem amittere*: or this: *Regi in partem non suam involanti, vis justa opponi potest.* Or this other: *Qui Principes sub populo sunt, sive ab initio talem acceperunt potestatem, sive postea ita convenit, ut Lacedæmone, si peccent in Leges, ac Rempublicam, non tantum vi repelli possint. sed si opus sit, morte puniri.* But I shall spare loyal ears, and only leave this Caution. *Quiescat porrò mente, & desinat Lacessere, malefacta ne noscat sua.*

I had almost forgot his *creaking triumph*, what glorious exploits he has atchieved in his former adventures: but the *Author of the Ecclesiastical Policy* will doubtless be as civil to him, as he was to the Author of the *Friendly Debate* (not that between Sir Saran, and Master Skerlock) and take some handsome occasion to claw him with a Congratulatory Epistle, and rejoyce with him in his great successes. *Having* (says he) *as I think* (that was an useful, and modest parenthesis) *demonstrated the sin, and mischiefs of separation, and evacuated all the excuses, and palliations of it from the plea of Christian Liberty, and pretence of Tender Conscience, I cannot see what should remain able to perpetuate our Distractions, &c.* Wherein I can thus far agree with him, that he has *evacuated all the excuses of Schism* from *the pretence of tender Conscience*; for none will be very forward *to pretend a tender Conscience* (of his making,) least he be beg'd for an Idiot, and sent to the Colledge of *all Fools*: But for his boast of *evacuating excuses and palliations*, it's but the *Rodomontado* of *Scignior di Medico Campo*. He that fetcht *Prester Johns* Head from *China*, after it had been a fortnight burried, and set it on his shoulders again; He that Cured *Shirley* in the *Grand Sophies* Court, when he had been twice shot through with Ordnance, and had two Canon-bullets in each thigh; He that gather'd up the vomited fragments of his friend, eaten by the *Canibals*, placed them together, and restored him to a perfect Man again; But I shall leave the *Enquirer* to the pleasing Dream of his heroick Victories.

His Argument from the danger of introducing Popery by our Divisions is seasonable, and his Counsel thereupon grateful, only we could wish he would prescribe it to those whose Circumstances enable them to remove our difference, by removing their true and proper causes. And let me remind him for a farewel; That whosoever shall deny us the Liberty to judge of the Lawfulness of our own Acts, or shall teach us the Art to rub on with a doubting Conscience, has paved a broad Causway for, and rear'd a triumphant Arch to entertain his *Holiness*, if the wisdom of our *Superiours* (not imposed upon by such trifling declamations) did not obstruct his entrance.

FINIS.